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CIMARRON

THE COMPLETE GRAPHIC NOVEL

NEAL STEPHENSON
CHARLES C. MANN
MARK TEPP
ELLIS AMDUR
ROBERT SAMMELIN
DEAN KOTZ

the
FOREWORLD
SAGA



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CIMARRONIN

The Complete Graphic Novel

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the
**FOREWORLD
SAGA**

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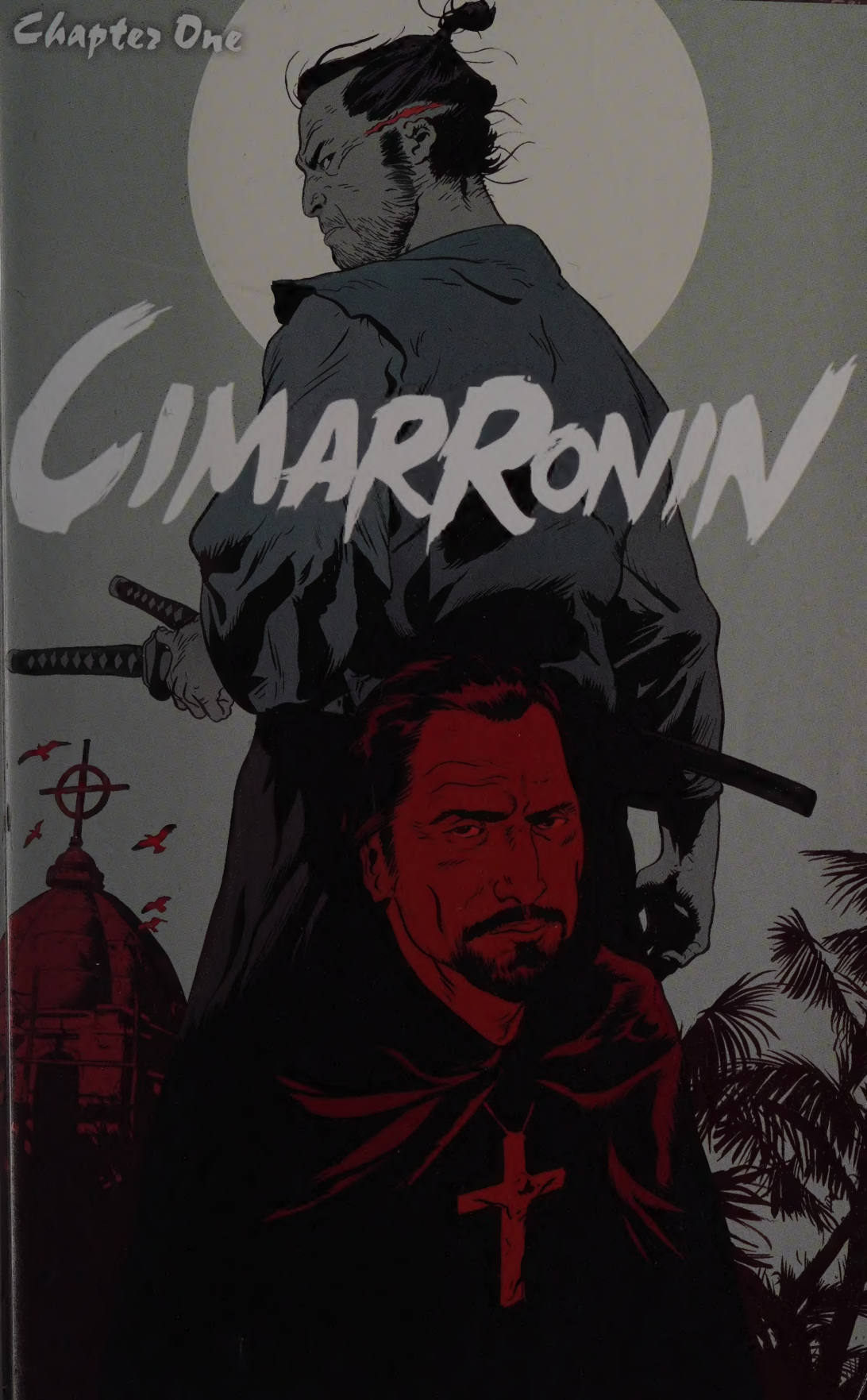
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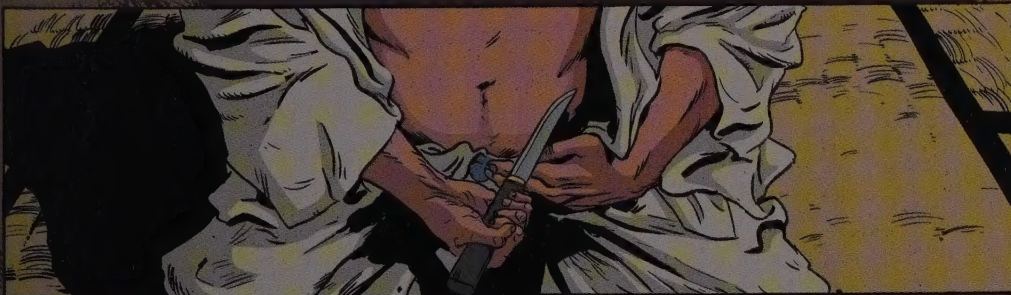
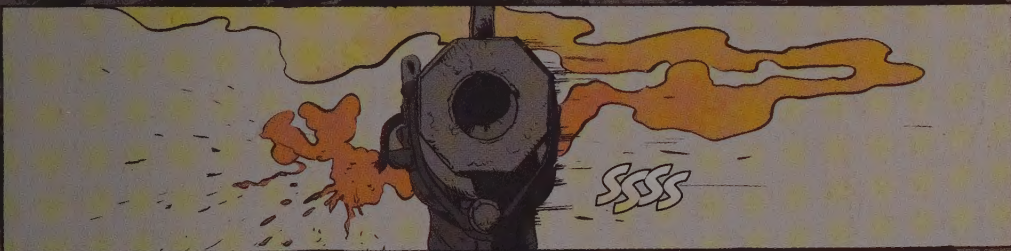
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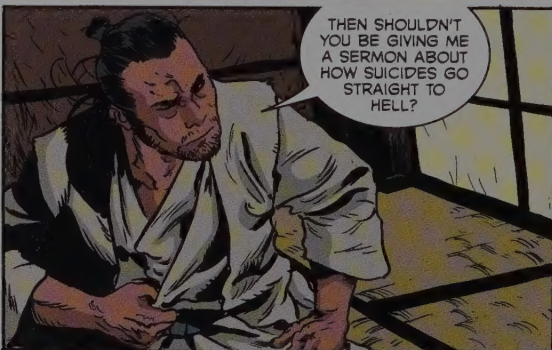
Chapter One



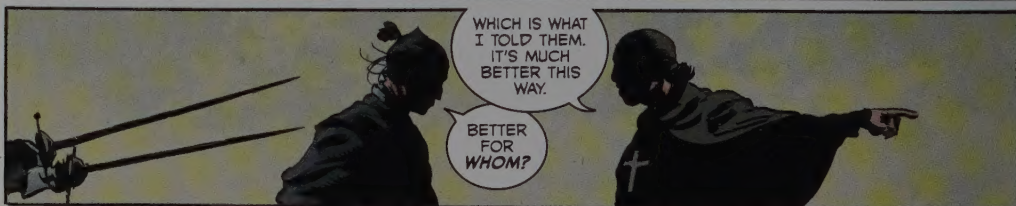




MANILA, 1632







I
PROTEST!



THIS MAN IS
A SAMURAI, OF
KNIGHTLY LINEAGE.
WE HAVE BROUGHT
HIM HERE AS A
GUEST, TO OBTAIN
HIS COUNSEL.



YOU ARE A
FUNNY FELLOW,
DE GUZMÁN,
HIS *COUNSEL*,
YOU SAY?

COUNSEL
THIS!



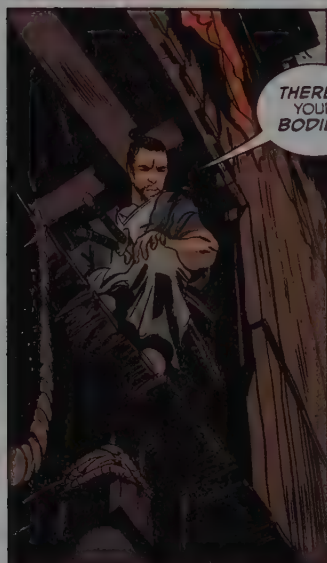
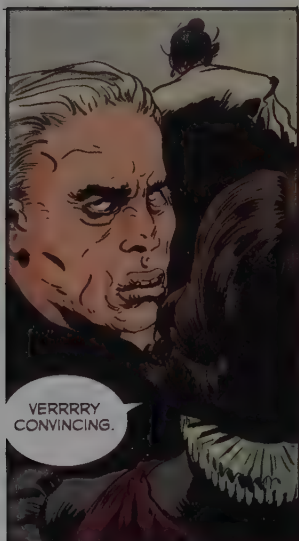
NATURALLY,
WE THOUGHT
OF YOU,
KITAZUME.

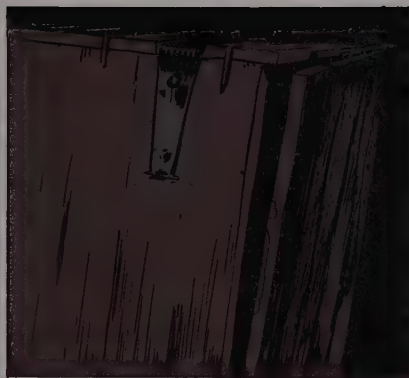
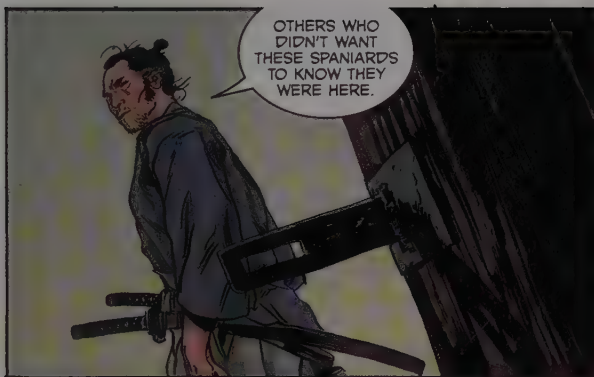


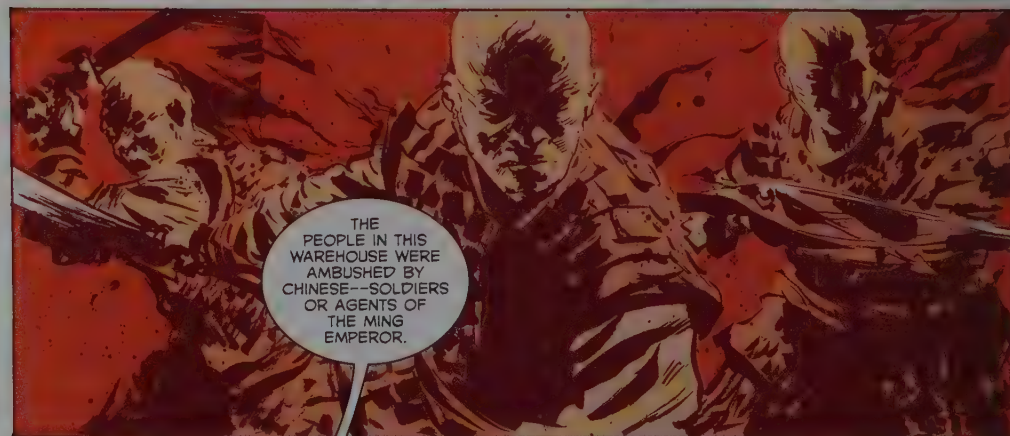
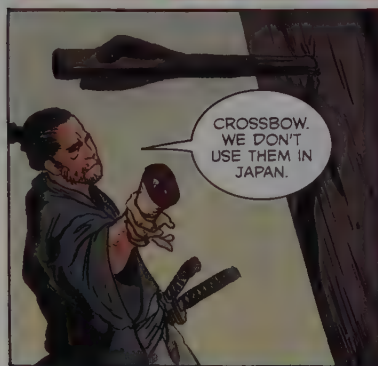
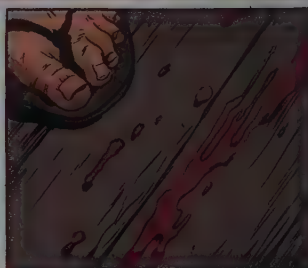
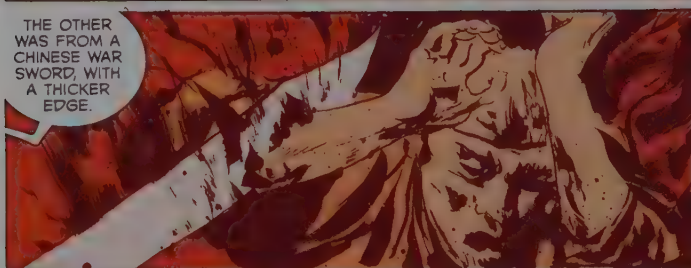
NOBODY
MOVE.

IF YOU
WISH ME TO
EXAMINE THIS
WAREHOUSE, DO
NOTHING MORE
TO DISTURB
IT.









THE
OBVIOUS
GUESS? THEY
WERE
MANCHU.



IT
DIDN'T
TURN OUT
WELL.



WHOEVER
WAS IN
HERE--



--WAS
READY FOR
THEM.



FIRST
THIS
ONE.

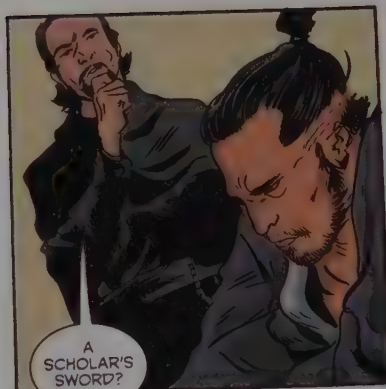
THEN THE
MANCHU
CHEWED HIS
WAY UP THE
NEXT MING'S
BODY--



--ON HIS
WAY TO THE
THROAT.

USING A JIAN.
DOUBLE-EDGED,
SYMMETRICAL
BLADE.





A
SCHOLAR'S
SWORD?



WITH
A PRETTY
TASSEL.



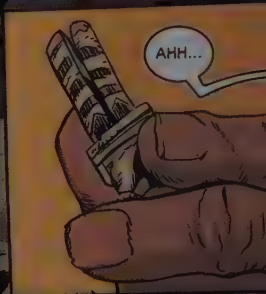
HERE
THE MANCHU
SLIPPED--BUT
MAINTAINED
BALANCE.



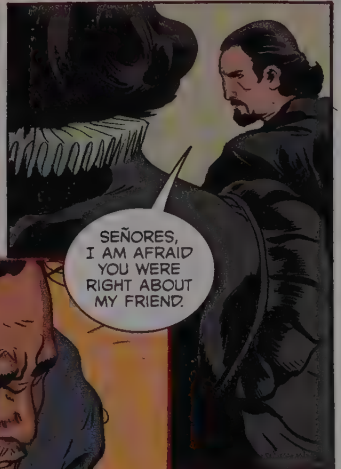
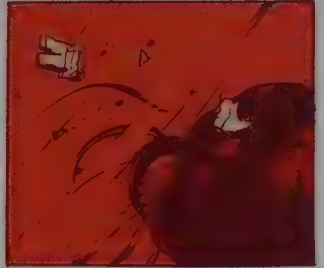
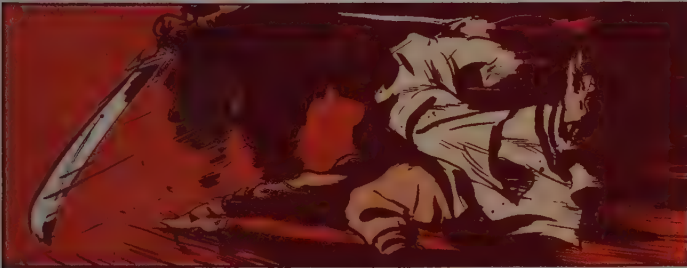
IMPRESSIVE.



THE
MANCHU WAS
AN ADOLESCENT.
THE LIGHT AND
SUPPLE JIAN
WAS PERFECT
FOR HIM.

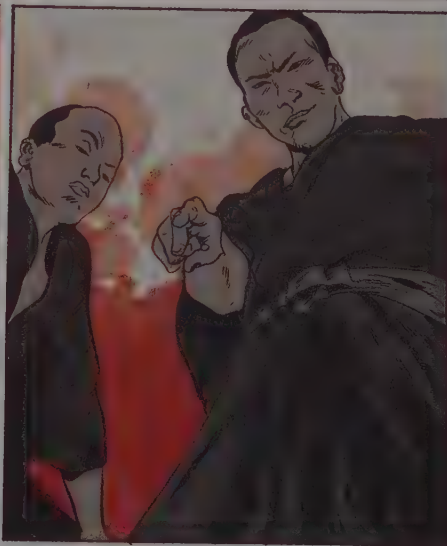
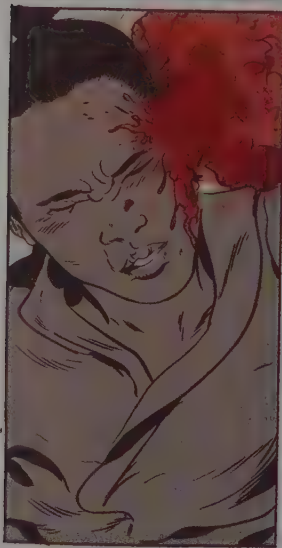


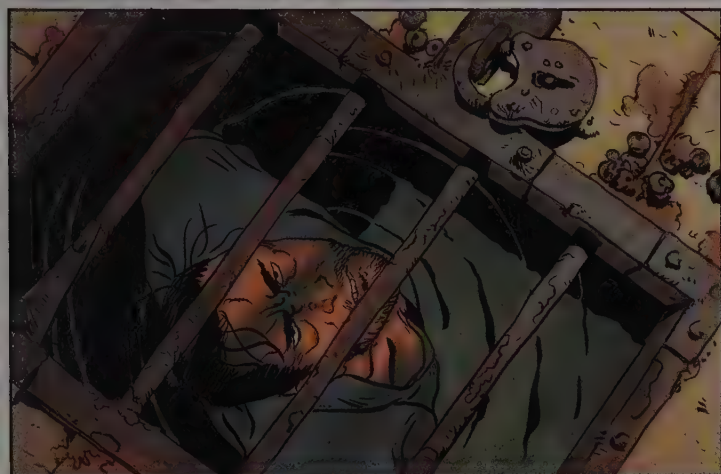
AHH...



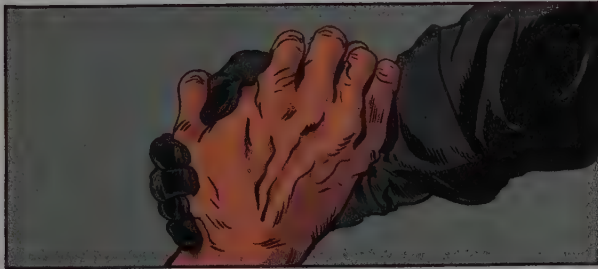
THONKK

SEÑORES,
I AM AFRAID
YOU WERE
RIGHT ABOUT
MY FRIEND.













YOU
TOLD ME THAT
CHRISTIANITY IS
THE RELIGION
OF PEACE.

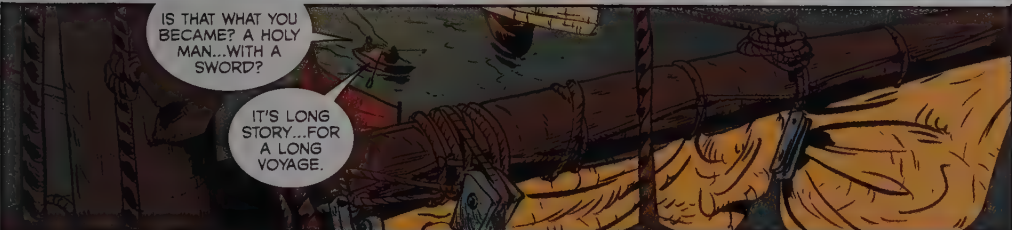
AH,
NO. IT IS THE
FAITH FOR
FORGIVENESS.



WE STILL
HAVE MILITARY
ORDERS, YOU
KNOW.

HUH?

MONKS
WHO FIGHT.
LIKE THE
ONES IN
CHINA.



IS THAT WHAT YOU
BECAME? A HOLY
MAN...WITH A
SWORD?

IT'S LONG
STORY...FOR
A LONG
VOYAGE.



SPEAKING
OF
SWORDS...

THE BIG
ONE IS SAFE.
AS SAFE AS
ANYTHING CAN
BE ON A SHIP
BOUND FOR
ACAPULCO.



BUT IN
CASE YOU
NEED TO
PARE YOUR
NAILS...



ONCE A YEAR, THE GREAT GALLEONS SAILED FROM ACAPULCO TO MANILA, CARRYING FORTUNES IN MEXICAN SILVER.



IN MANILA, THOUSANDS OF CHINESE TRADERS BARTERED FOR THE SILVER--THE BASIS OF CHINA'S MONEY SUPPLY.



AND ONCE A YEAR, THE GREAT GALLEONS RETURNED TO ACAPULCO, CARRYING FORTUNES IN SILK, SPICES, PORCELAIN, AND SLAVES.



CHINA'S MING EMPERORS HAD BEEN FIGHTING MANCHU INVADERS FOR DECADES.



BUT BOTH SIDES KNEW THAT WITHOUT THE SILVER FROM MEXICO, CHINA'S ECONOMY WOULD COLLAPSE...



I OWE YOU
FOR THAT FIRST
TIME, IN SATSUMA?
BUT WHAT JUST
HAPPENED WAS
STAGED LIKE A NOH
DRAMA--TO FORCE
ME TO COME
WITH YOU.

STAB
YOURSELF IN
THE BELLY OR
GO TO MEXICO:
WHAT'S THE
DIFFERENCE?

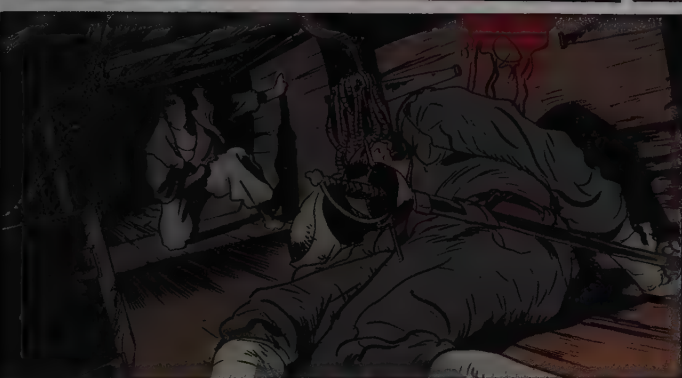
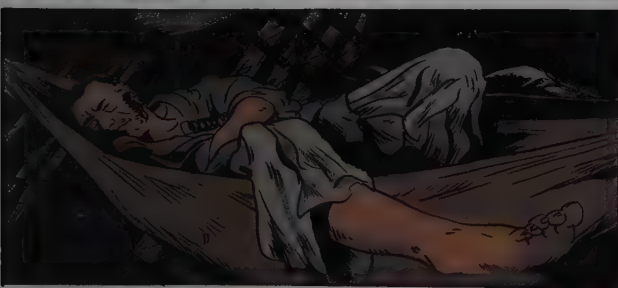
IN THE END,
GON-SAN, YOU
WILL THANK
ME.

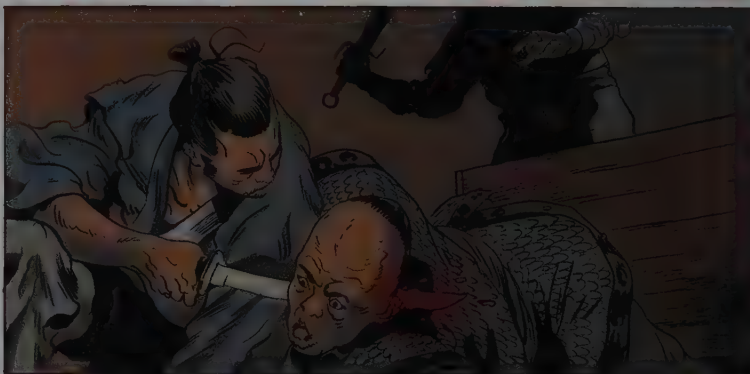
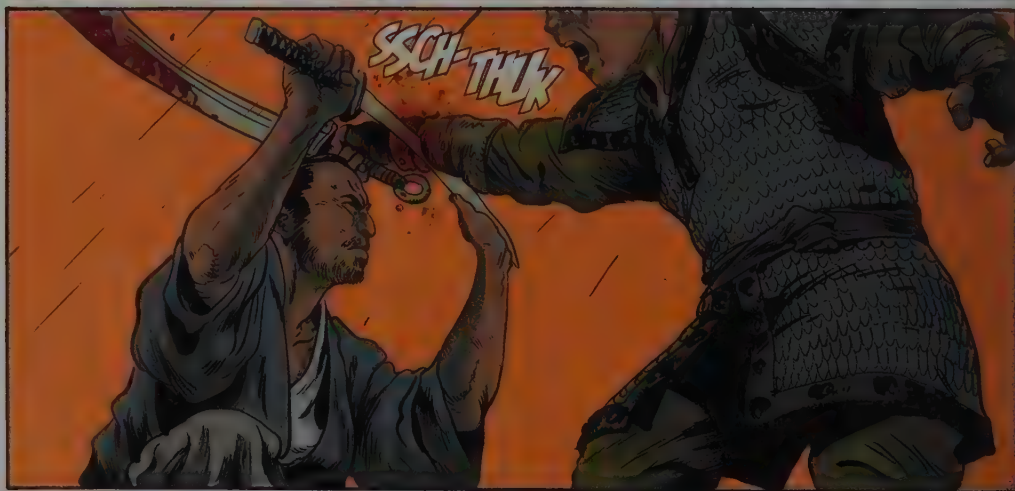
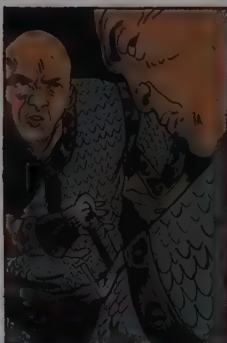
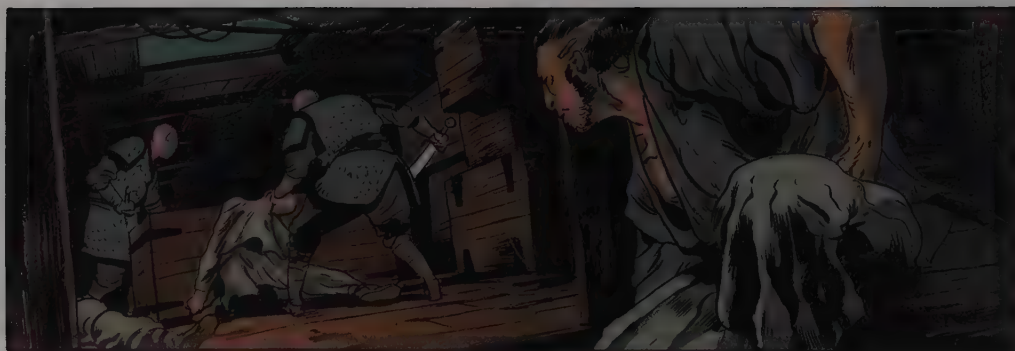
LOOK AT
THIS SHIP. SPAIN
IS THE GREATEST,
RICHEST EMPIRE IN
THE WORLD. NEW
SPAIN--MEXICO
CITY--IS ITS CENTER.
YOU WILL
FLOURISH.

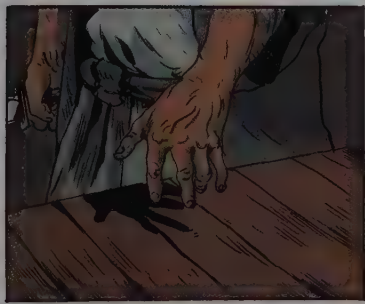
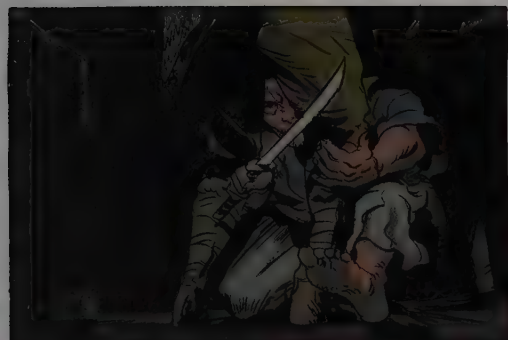


IT IS 3000
LEAGUES
FARTHER FROM
MY HOME.

YOU WILL
FORGET JAPAN
WHEN YOU SEE
NEW SPAIN.









誰だ、
お前は
?! *

你是哪裡鑽
出來的賊王
八?! *

* WHO THE FUCK ARE YOU?

SHE IS
IRGEN--

--EASTERN
JEWEL OF THE AISIN
GORO, FOURTH
DAUGHTER OF YANGGINU,
BEILE OF THE YEHE
CLAN, PRINCESS UNDER
HEAVEN, GUARDIANESS
OF THE MANCHU
NATION--

--AND
SOMEONE
WHOM I WOULD
LIKE TO REMAIN
ALIVE.

YOU
KNOW
HER?

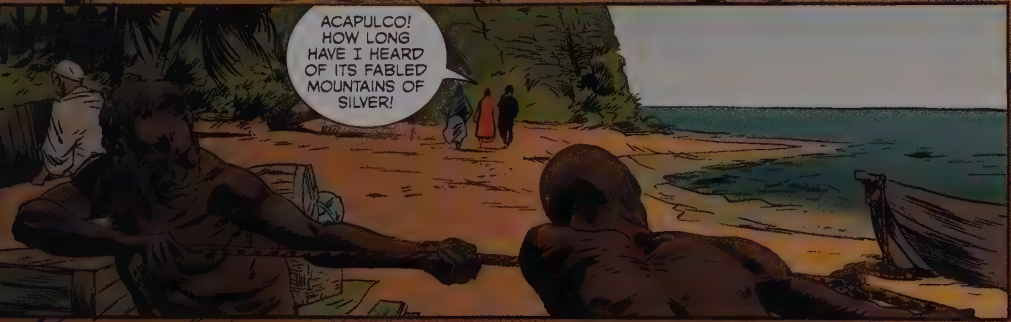
HOW DO
YOU THINK
SHE GOT
HERE?

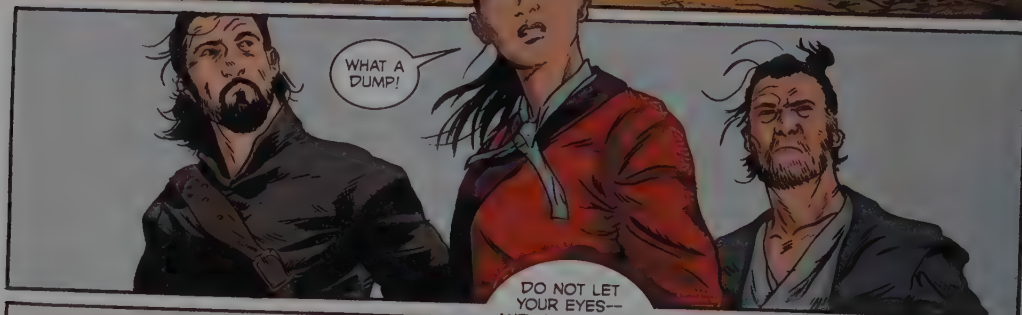
クソタレナ
JESUITS!







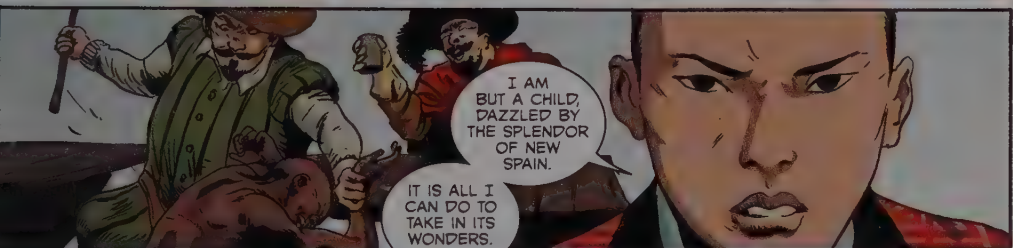




THAT
WOULD BE MY
FAMILY'S MINES—
200 LEAGUES
FROM HERE.

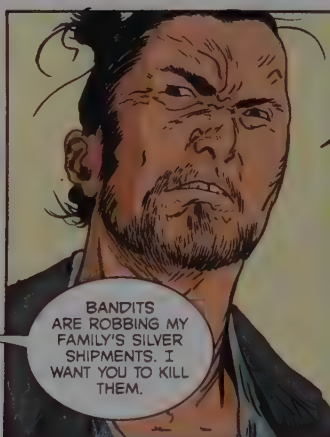




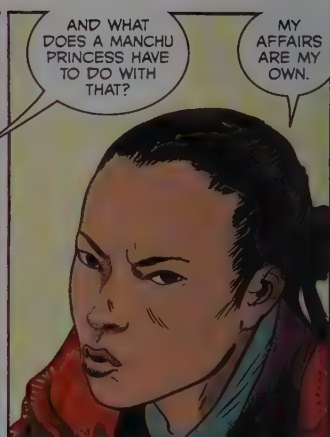




ALL
RIGHT...



BANDITS
ARE ROBBING MY
FAMILY'S SILVER
SHIPMENTS. I
WANT YOU TO KILL
THEM.



AND WHAT
DOES A MANCHU
PRINCESS HAVE
TO DO WITH
THAT?

MY
AFFAIRS
ARE MY
OWN.



YOU
SEE? SHE
CANNOT BE
TRUSTED.

REGARDLESS,
SHE IS COMING
WITH US.

THIS IS
RIDICULOUS.
I DON'T EVEN
HAVE MY
WEAPONS--



O YE
OF LITTLE
FAITH!



THIS IS
THE FAMOUS
CAMINO REAL?
IT'S AN OX
TRACK!

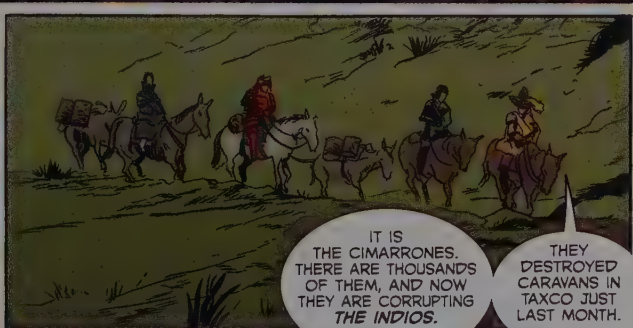


AN
OX TRACK
FULL OF
SILVER.

MEN HAVE
DIED ALONG
EVERY LEAGUE
OF IT.



OUT OF BOREDOM,
NO DOUBT, OR THIS
POISON THEY CALL
FOOD.

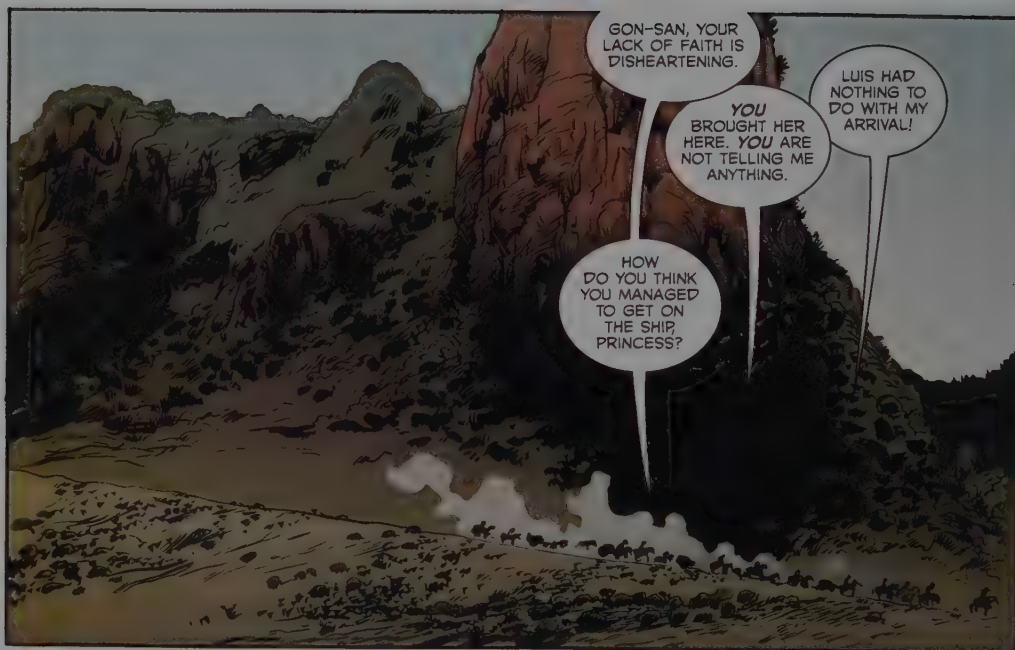


IT IS
THE CIMARRONES.
THERE ARE THOUSANDS
OF THEM, AND NOW
THEY ARE CORRUPTING
THE INDIOS.

THEY
DESTROYED
CARAVANS IN
TAXCO JUST
LAST MONTH.



MAYBE
THEY'LL
TAKE
HER...



GON-SAN, YOUR
LACK OF FAITH IS
DISHEARTENING.

YOU
BROUGHT HER
HERE. YOU ARE
NOT TELLING ME
ANYTHING.

LUIS HAD
NOTHING TO
DO WITH MY
ARRIVAL!

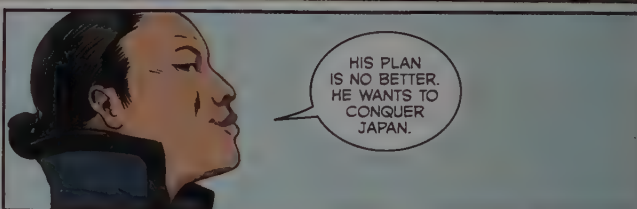
HOW
DO YOU THINK
YOU MANAGED
TO GET ON
THE SHIP,
PRINCESS?



SHE IS HERE TO
NEGOTIATE WITH
SPAIN. THE MANCHU
ARE WINNING THE
WAR AGAINST THE
MING---

--AND THEY
WANT SPANISH
SILVER TO KEEP
FLOWING FROM
NEW SPAIN TO
MANILA.

ABSURD. THE
MANCHU SENT
HER--JUST
HER!--TO NEW
SPAIN?



HIS PLAN
IS NO BETTER.
HE WANTS TO
CONQUER
JAPAN.



WHAT!?!

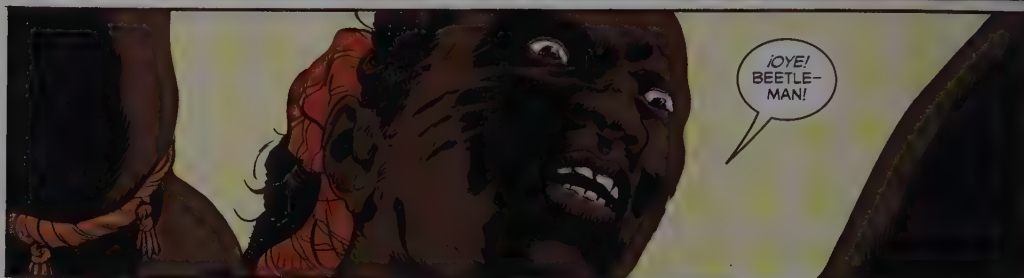
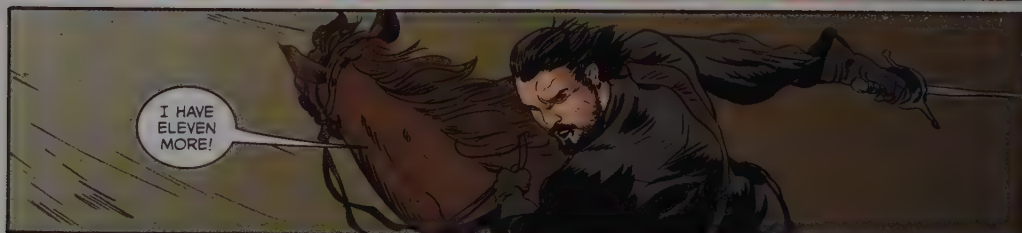
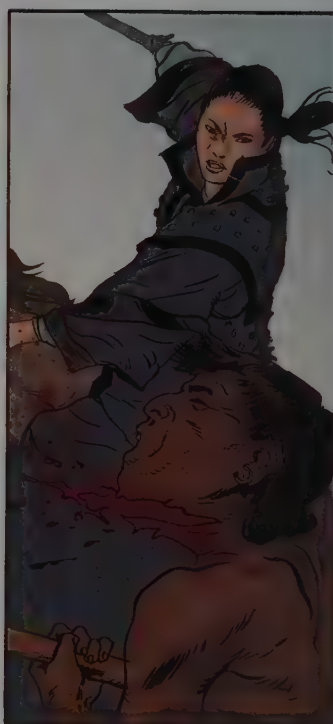


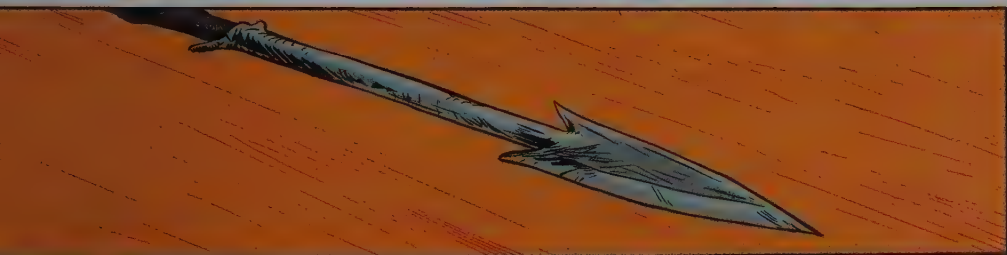
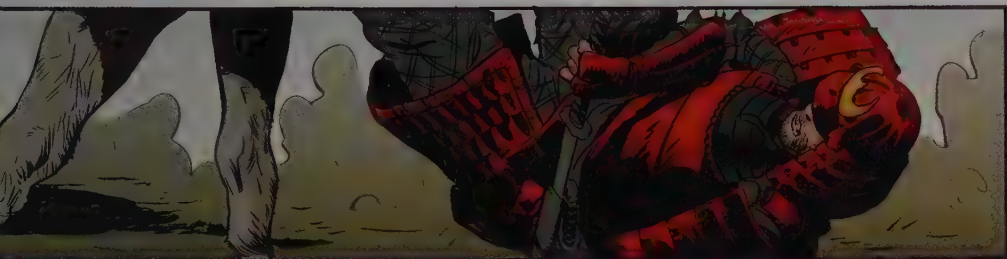
JUST
PART OF
IT.

A SMALL
PART. ONLY
ONE ISL--



CIMARRONES!!

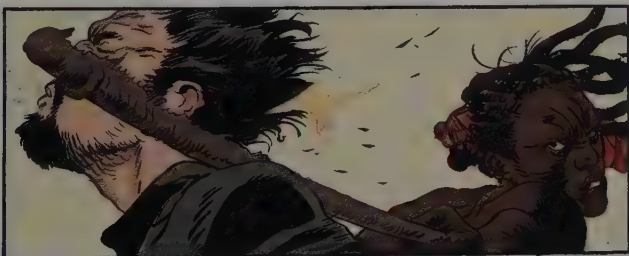








ONCE
YOU PIN A
BEETLE, IT IS
SIMPLE TO
CRACK ITS
SHELL.

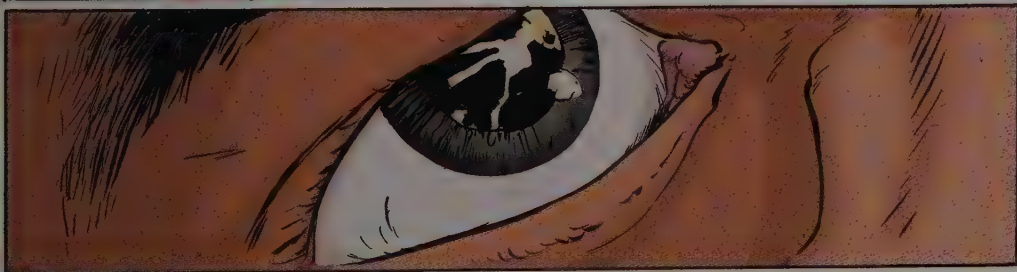
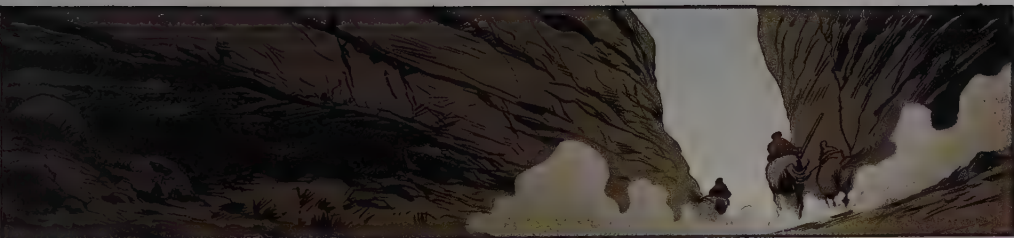


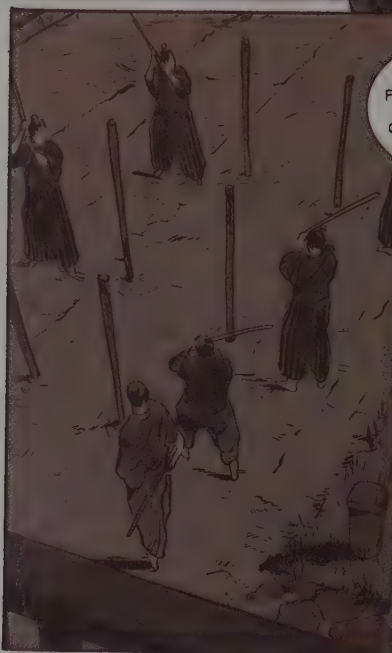
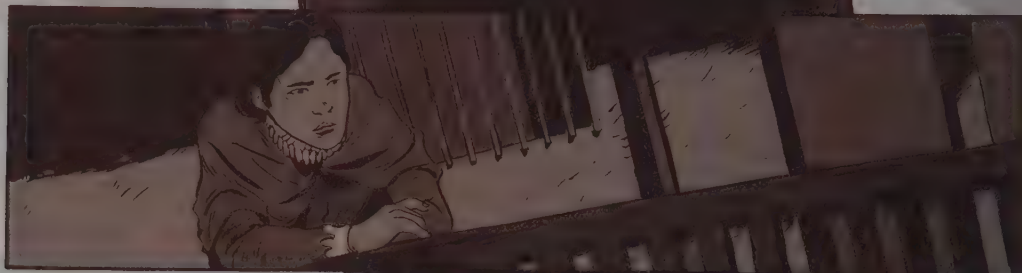
YOU NEED
A WOMAN AND
A PRIEST TO
RESCUE YOU,
BEETLE-
MAN?

TU-WHEE!

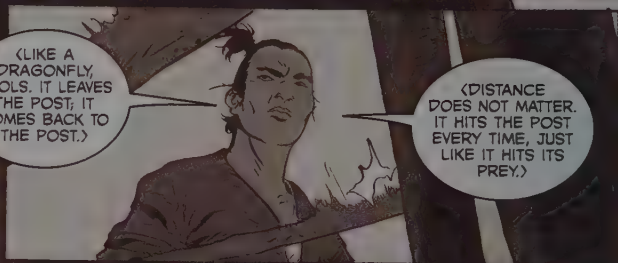
NO
NO NO
NO!



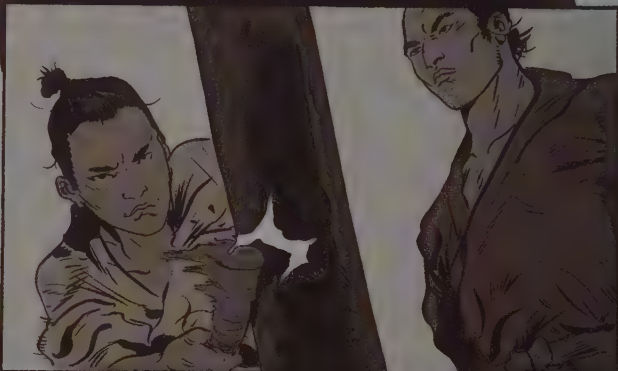


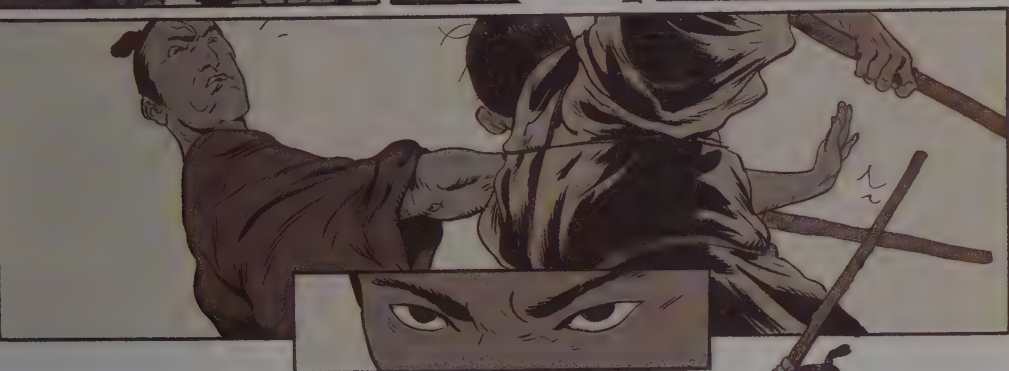
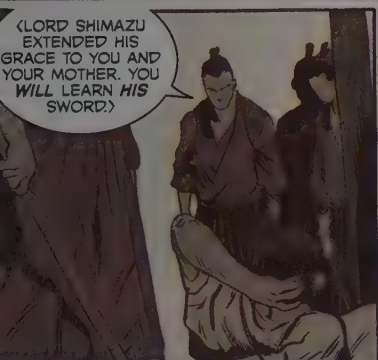


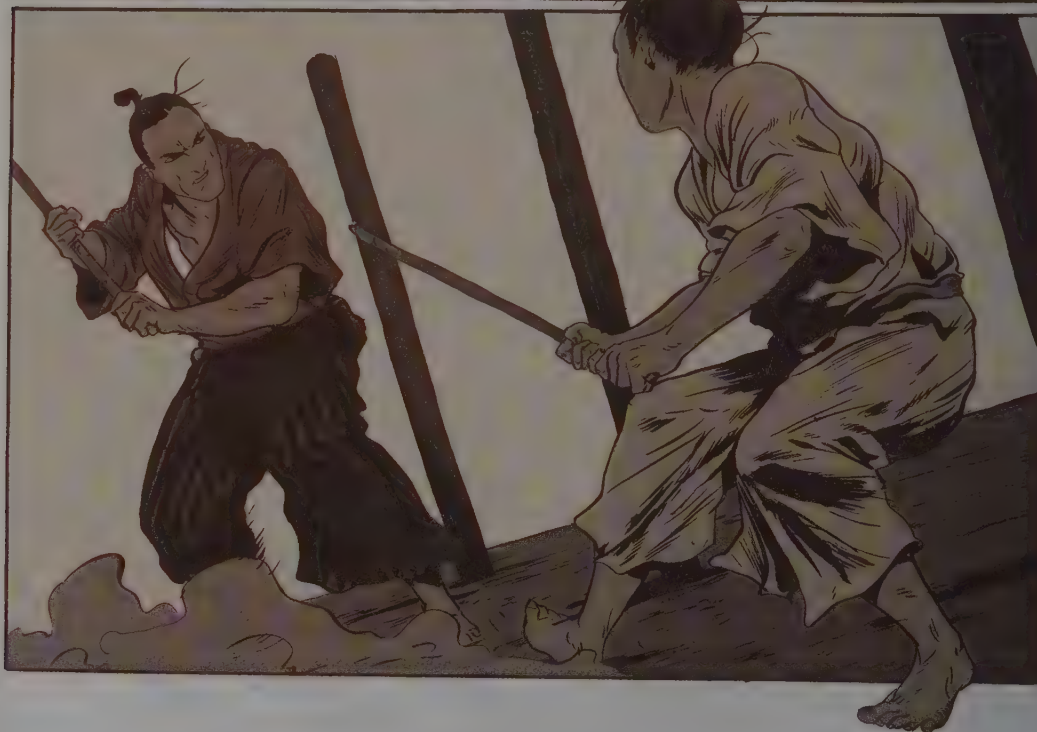
《LIKE A
DRAGONFLY,
FOOLS. IT LEAVES
THE POST, IT
COMES BACK TO
THE POST.》

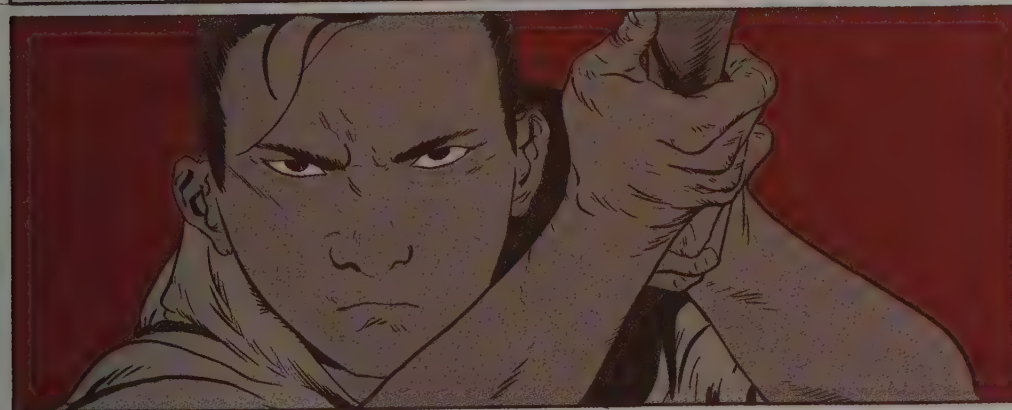


《DISTANCE
DOES NOT MATTER.
IT HITS THE POST
EVERY TIME, JUST
LIKE IT HITS ITS
PREY.》



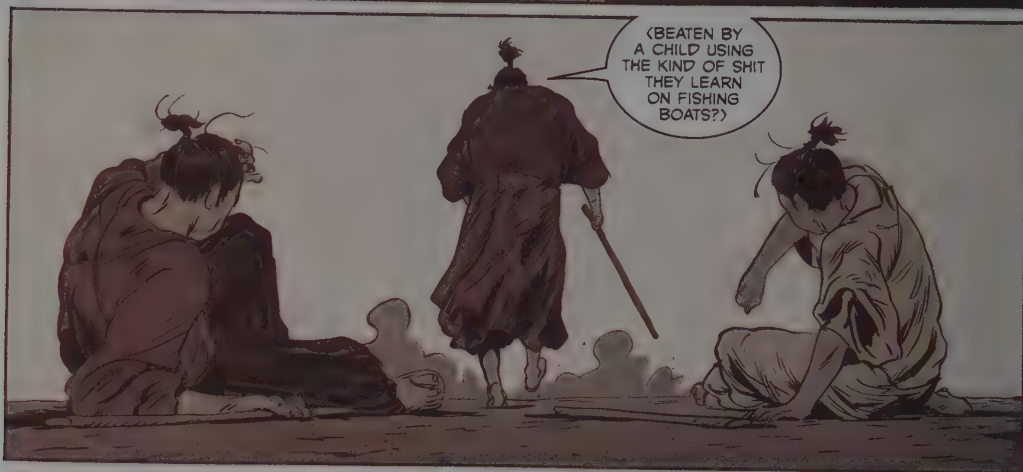








(MIZUSHINA!
THIS IS HOW YOU
FULFILL YOUR
RESPONSIBILITY TO
YOUR LORD AND
TO JIGEN-RYU?)

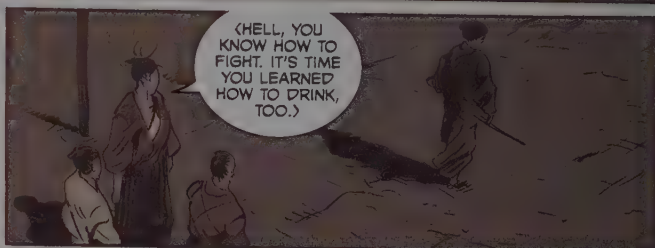


(BEATEN BY
A CHILD USING
THE KIND OF SHIT
THEY LEARN
ON FISHING
BOATS?)



(I GUESS WE
ARE NOW
BROTHERS OF
THE BROKEN
HEADS.)

(LET'S GO
DRINKING
LATER.)



(HELL, YOU
KNOW HOW TO
FIGHT. IT'S TIME
YOU LEARNED
HOW TO DRINK,
TOO.)

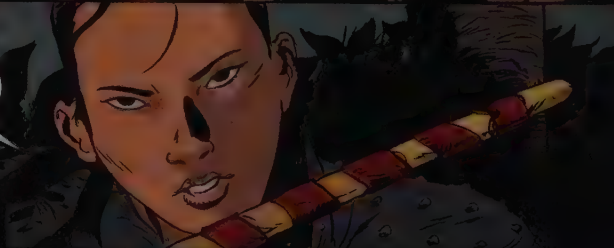


(JUN-KUN.
SHIGE-CHAN.
NOT A WORD
FROM YOU TWO
TO YOUNG
SENSEI, OR
I'LL...)





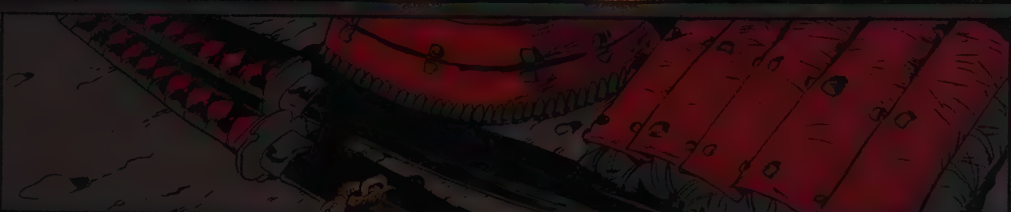
WELL, THIS
SHOULD BE
INTERESTING...



Chapter Three





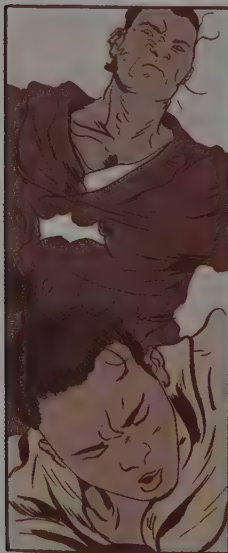




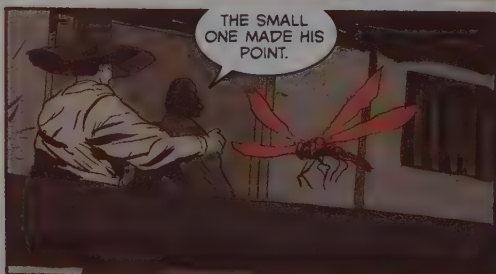
SATSUMA, JAPAN. 1607.

IT WOULD BE A
DIFFERENT BATTLE
IF EITHER OF THEM
KNEW THE ART OF
DESTREZA.

STILL, THE
SMALL ONE
KNOWS HOW
TO FIGHT.



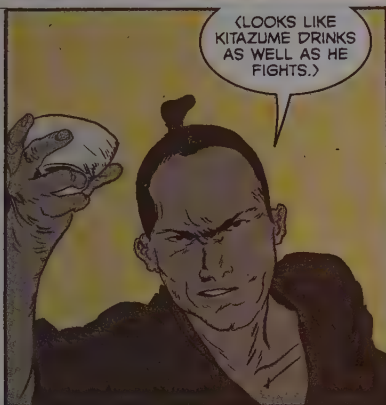
BETTER
IF HE KNEW
WHEN TO
FIGHT.

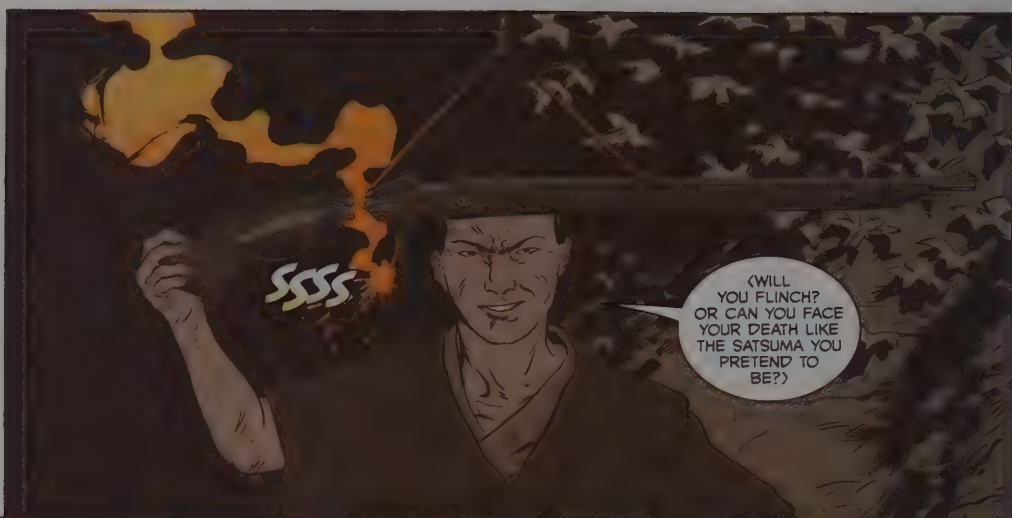


THE SMALL
ONE MADE HIS
POINT.



THAT
WAS NO
VICTORY.





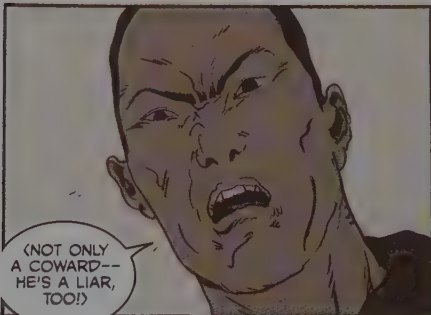
⟨WILL
YOU FLINCH?
OR CAN YOU FACE
YOUR DEATH LIKE
THE SATSUMA YOU
PRETEND TO
BE?⟩



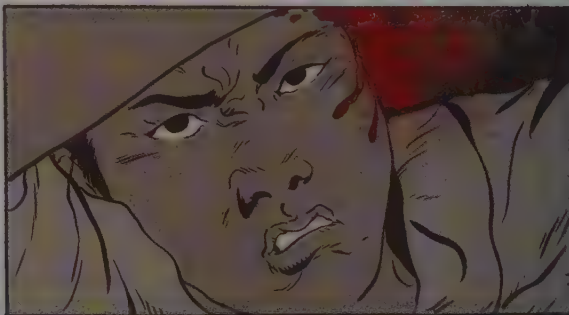
⟨YOU
FLINCHED⟩



⟨I DID
NOT.⟩



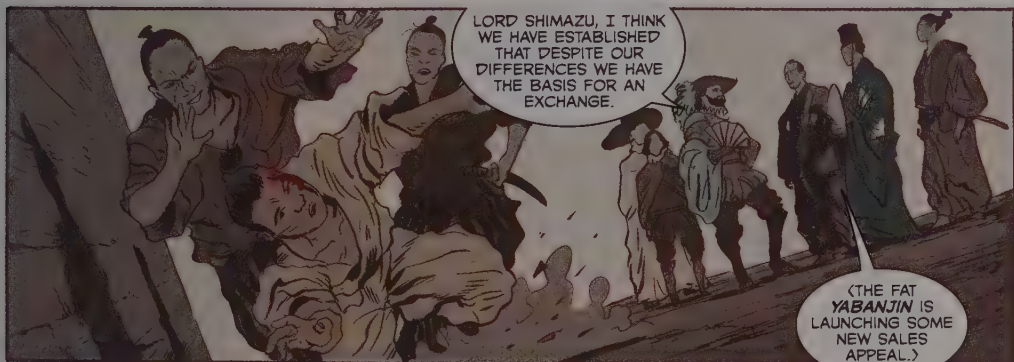
⟨NOT ONLY
A COWARD--
HE'S A LIAR,
TOO!⟩





(PIRATE SCUM!)

(COWARD!)



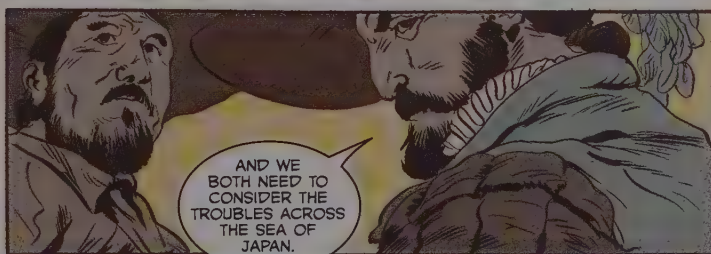
LORD SHIMAZU, I THINK WE HAVE ESTABLISHED THAT DESPITE OUR DIFFERENCES WE HAVE THE BASIS FOR AN EXCHANGE.

(THE FAT YABANJIN IS LAUNCHING SOME NEW SALES APPEAL.)



WE NEED TO EXPLAIN TO THE SHOGUN HIS MISTAKE IN CLOSING YOUR TRADE WITH US--A TRADE IN EXOTIC GOODS FROM WHICH ALL WOULD BENEFIT.

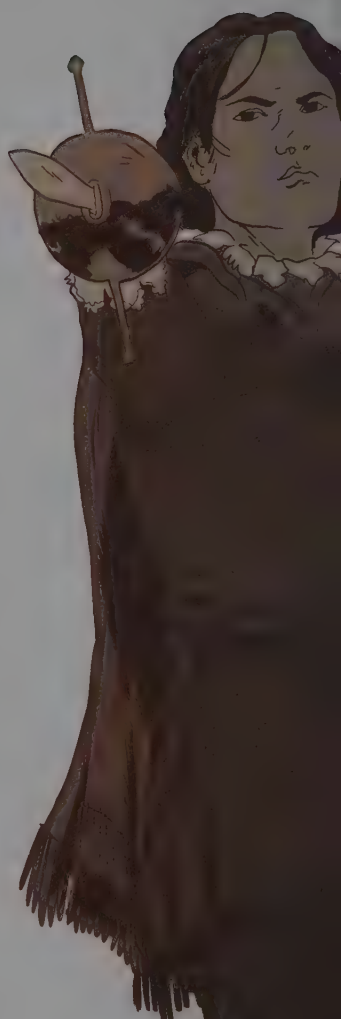
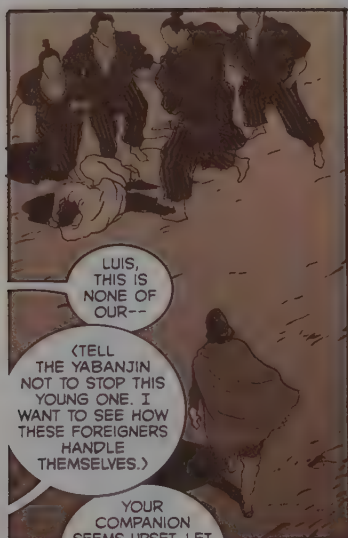
(HE THINKS THERE WILL ALWAYS BE A MARKET FOR OUR SILK AND PORCELAIN. THE SPANIARDS WILL NEVER LEARN HOW TO MAKE THEM THEMSELVES. SO HE'S SUGGESTING THAT WE DEFY THE TOKUGAWA.)

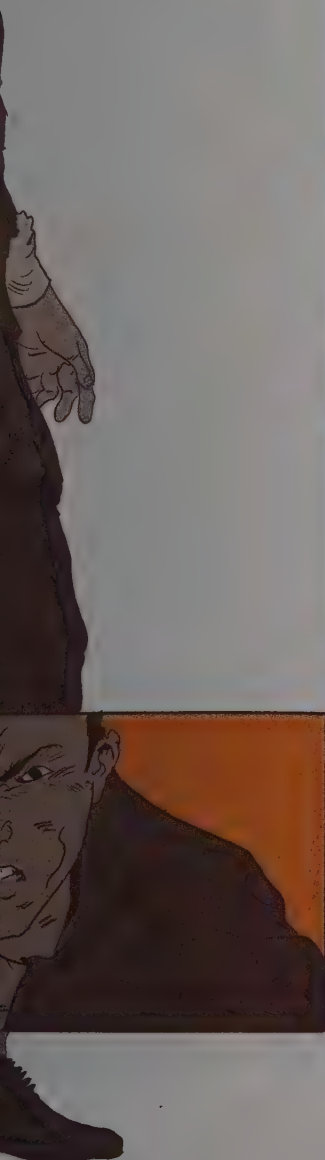
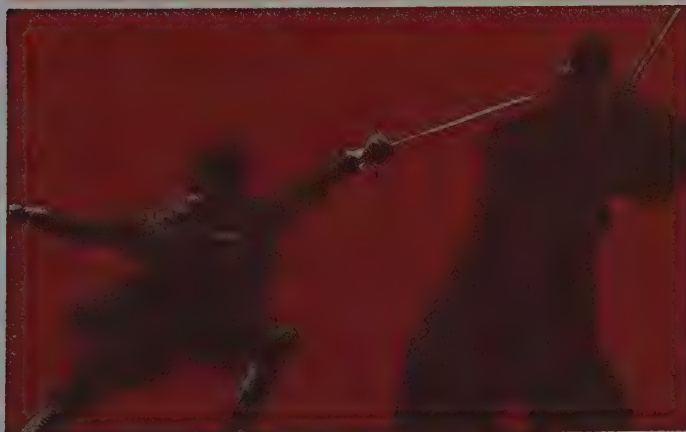
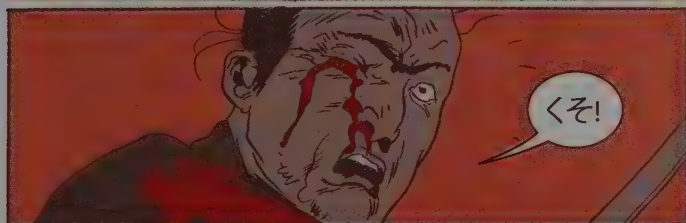
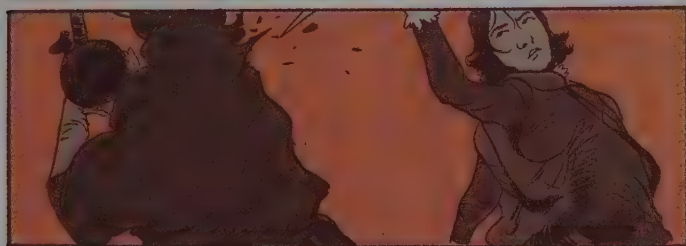
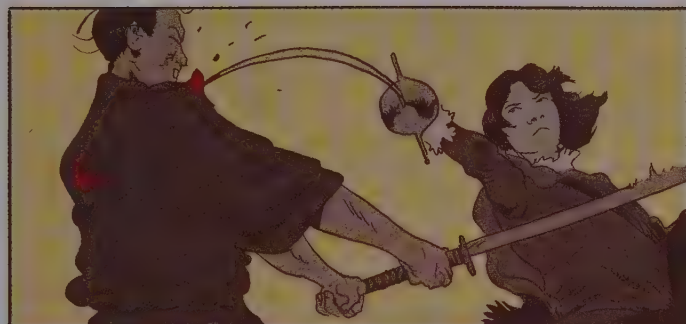


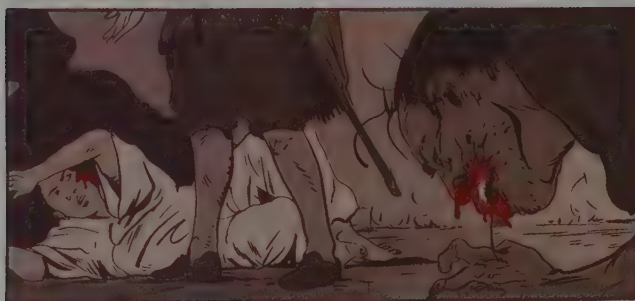
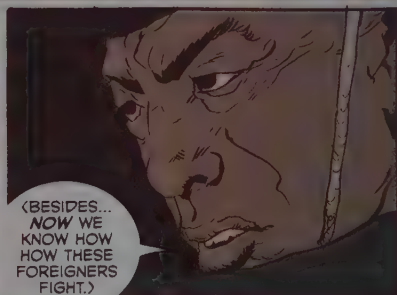
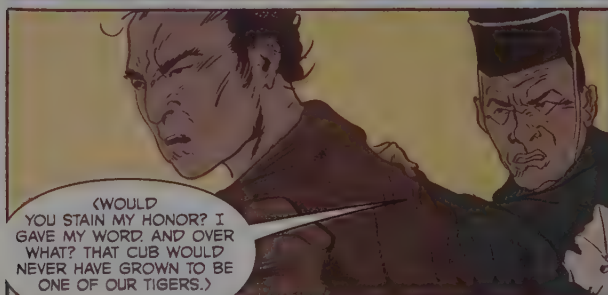
AND WE BOTH NEED TO CONSIDER THE TROUBLES ACROSS THE SEA OF JAPAN.



(HE WANTS TO STATION TROOPS HERE TO INVADE CHINA. HE THINKS HE CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CIVIL WAR.)

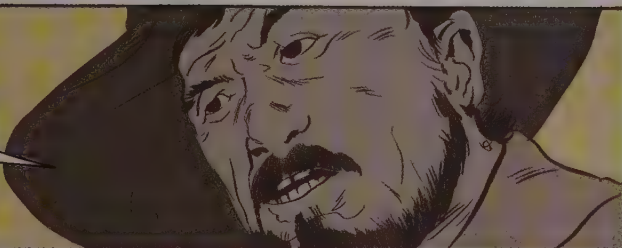






WHY IS
HE SAYING
THIS?

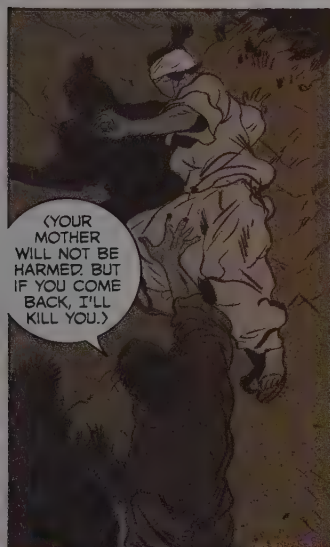
SOMEHOW
HE FORMED THE
IMPRESSION THAT
SPANISH
CONQUISTADORES
ARE VIOLENT AND
UNTRUSTWORTHY.



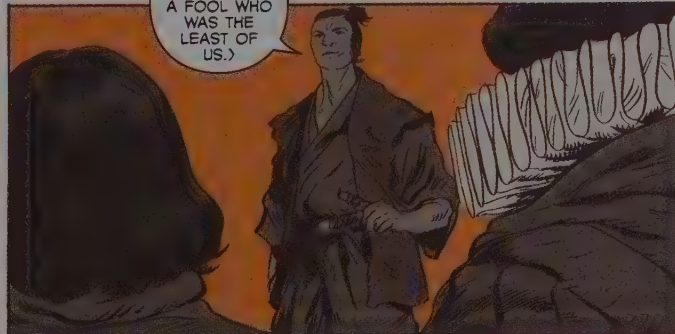
(YOU HAVE
COURAGE, BOY.
BUT YOU ARE
NOT ONE OF US.
YOU NEVER
WILL BE.)

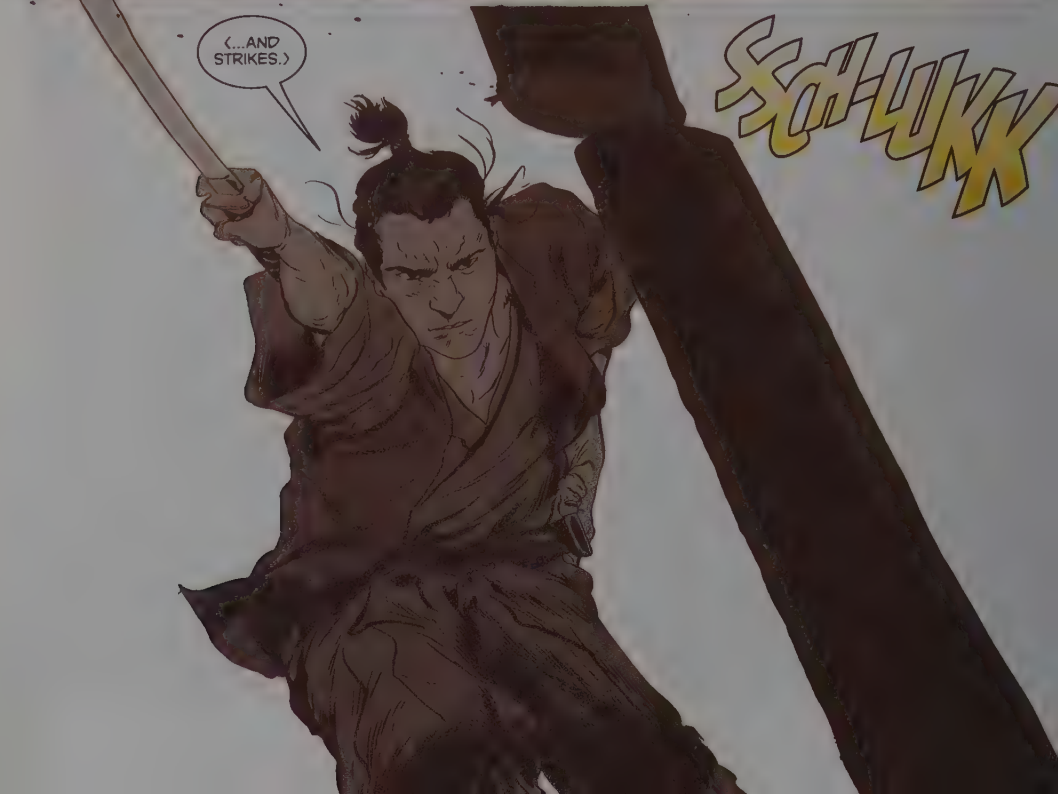


(YOUR
MOTHER
WILL NOT BE
HARMED, BUT
IF YOU COME
BACK, I'LL
KILL YOU.)



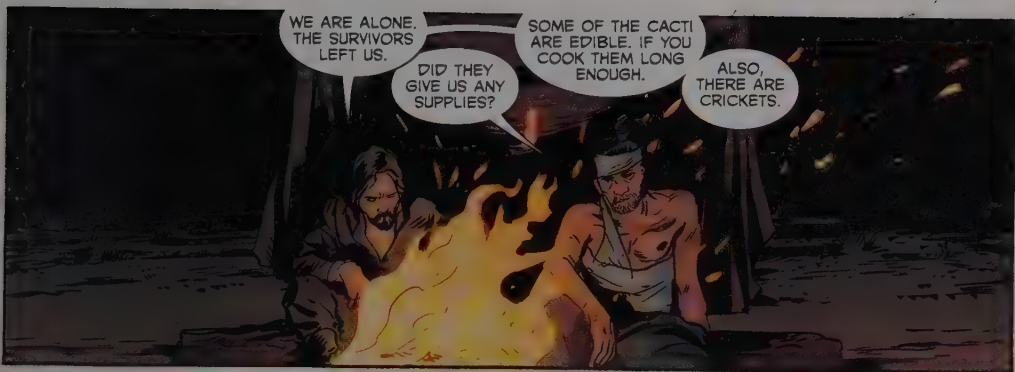
(PRETTY
BUTTERFLY!
YOU CUT UP
A FOOL WHO
WAS THE
LEAST OF
US.)

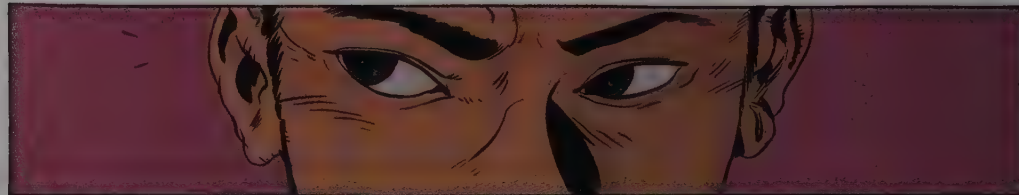


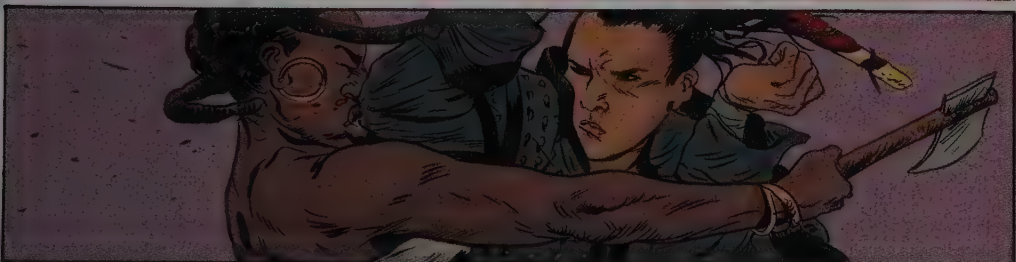
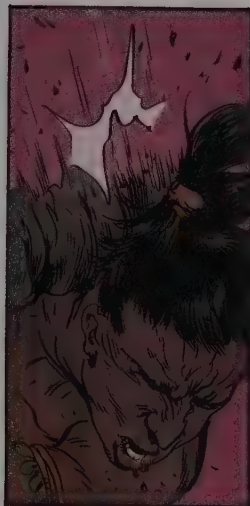




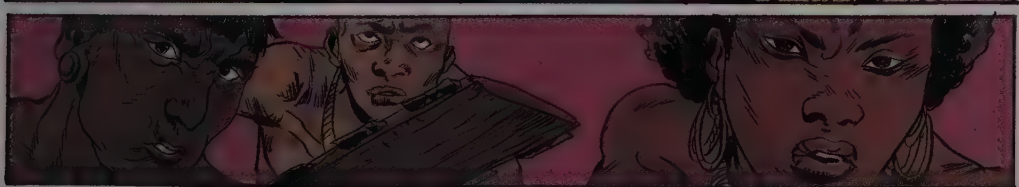














THAT
WOMAN IS A
SPANIARD!

THAT IS NO
SPANIARD!

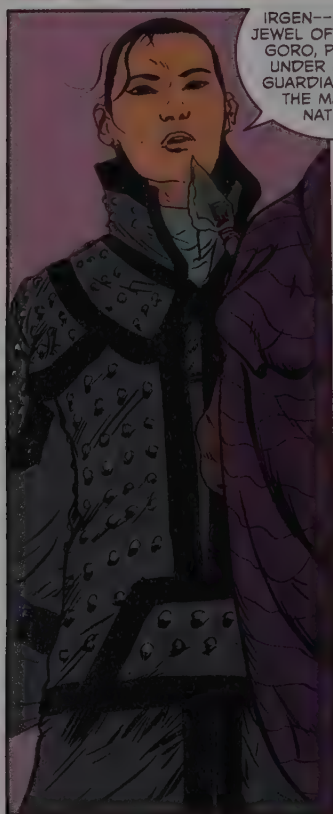


SHE WAS RIDING
IN THE CARAVAN
WE RAIDED, MY
NTINU. SHE TRIED
TO KILL ME WITH
HER LITTLE
SWORD.

TRIED.



ALL RIGHT. WHO
ARE YOU? WHAT
ARE YOU DOING
HERE?



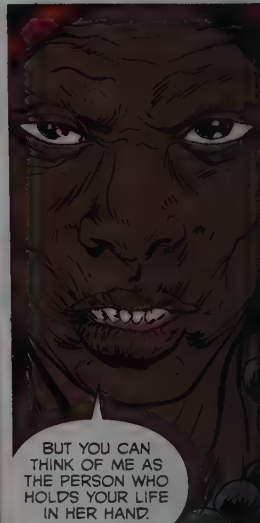
IRGEN--EASTERN
JEWEL OF THE AISIN
GORO, PRINCESS
UNDER HEAVEN,
GUARDIANESS OF
THE MANCHU
NATION.



HA
HA
HA
HA



WELL, I AM AQUALTUNE
NTUMBA LUA NZINGA--
MWANA YE NGUDI A
NTINU, PRINCESS RULER
OF KINIMI, LEADER OF
THE MAKANDA
KILUKENI.



BUT YOU CAN
THINK OF ME AS
THE PERSON WHO
HOLDS YOUR LIFE
IN HER HAND.



I LIKE YOUR SPIRIT.
BUT I NEED MORE
THAN THAT FROM YOU
IF I'M GOING TO
CATCH THE NEXT
SPEAR.

I CAME
ACROSS THE
WESTERN SEA TO
NEGOTIATE WITH
SPAIN. NOW I
NO LONGER
WISH TO.

GO
HOME,
THEN.

I THOUGHT OF
SOMETHING MORE
INTERESTING.



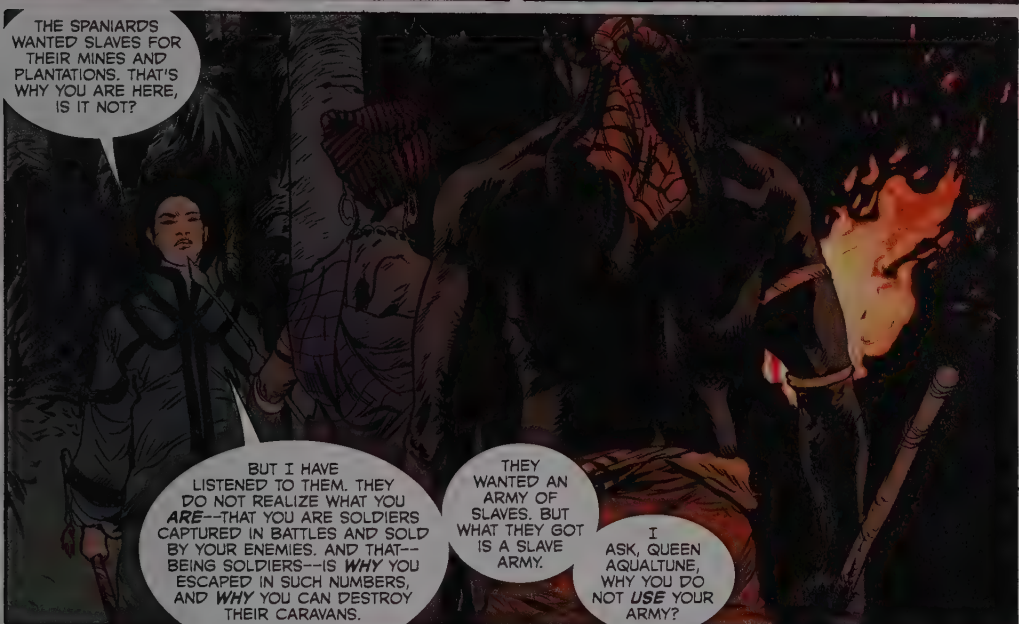
DO NOT
LISTEN TO
HER, MY
NTINU.



ONCE
AGAIN, MY
CAT. YOU
LEAP TOO
SOON.



HER BLADE
IS WRAPPED.
SHE COULD
HAVE KILLED
HALF A DOZEN
OF US.

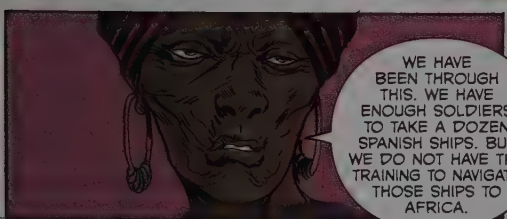


THE SPANIARDS
WANTED SLAVES FOR
THEIR MINES AND
PLANTATIONS. THAT'S
WHY YOU ARE HERE,
IS IT NOT?

BUT I HAVE
LISTENED TO THEM. THEY
DO NOT REALIZE WHAT YOU
ARE—THAT YOU ARE SOLDIERS
CAPTURED IN BATTLES AND SOLD
BY YOUR ENEMIES. AND THAT—
BEING SOLDIERS—IS WHY YOU
ESCAPED IN SUCH NUMBERS,
AND WHY YOU CAN DESTROY
THEIR CARAVANS.

THEY
WANTED AN
ARMY OF
SLAVES. BUT
WHAT THEY GOT
IS A SLAVE
ARMY.

I
ASK, QUEEN
AQUALTUNE,
WHY YOU DO
NOT USE YOUR
ARMY?

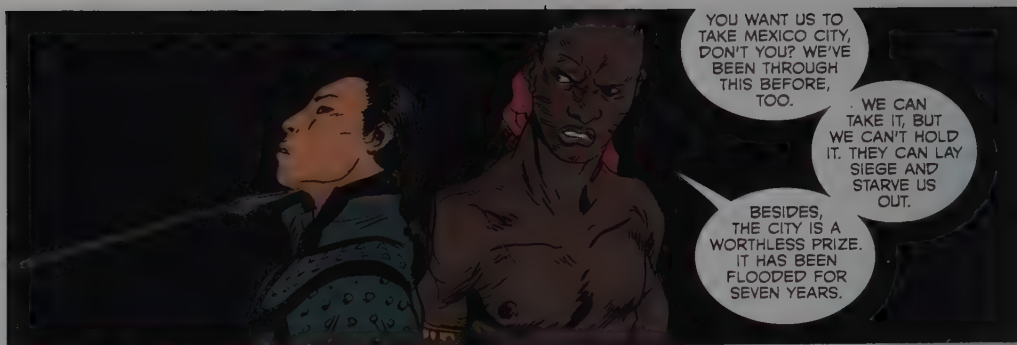


WE HAVE
BEEN THROUGH
THIS. WE HAVE
ENOUGH SOLDIERS
TO TAKE A DOZEN
SPANISH SHIPS. BUT
WE DO NOT HAVE THE
TRAINING TO NAVIGATE
THOSE SHIPS TO
AFRICA.



TELL ME
SOMETHING
NEW.

I
WILL.



YOU WANT US TO TAKE MEXICO CITY, DON'T YOU? WE'VE BEEN THROUGH THIS BEFORE, TOO.

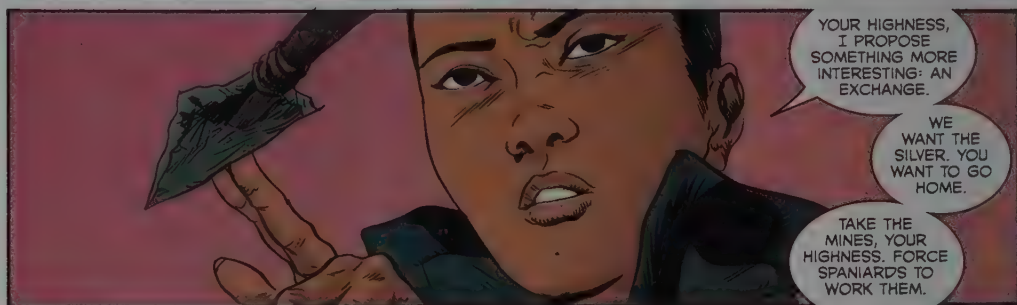
WE CAN TAKE IT, BUT WE CAN'T HOLD IT. THEY CAN LAY SIEGE AND STARVE US OUT.

BESIDES, THE CITY IS A WORTHLESS PRIZE. IT HAS BEEN FLOODED FOR SEVEN YEARS.



SO ALL YOU DO IS RAID A FEW CARAVANS? KILL A FEW SPANIARDS?

AND YOU CALL YOURSELVES WARRIORS?



YOUR HIGHNESS, I PROPOSE SOMETHING MORE INTERESTING: AN EXCHANGE.

WE WANT THE SILVER. YOU WANT TO GO HOME.

TAKE THE MINES, YOUR HIGHNESS. FORCE SPANIARDS TO WORK THEM.

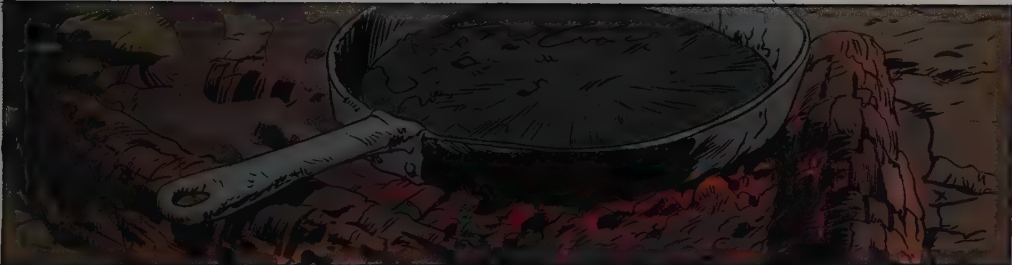


IF YOU SEND US THE SILVER, I WILL PROVIDE THE SAILORS TO NAVIGATE.

THE CREWS OF THE "SPANISH" SILVER SHIPS ACROSS THE WESTERN SEA--ALL CHINESE. NAVIGATORS, MATES--ALL CHINESE. THEY ARE IN ACAPULCO NOW. THEY WILL TAKE YOU HOME.

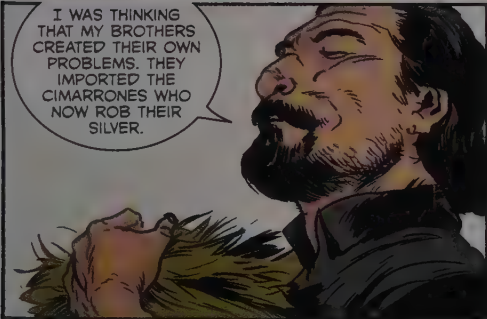
THE SPANIARDS ALWAYS BRAG THAT THEY TOOK NEW SPAIN WITH A FEW HUNDRED MEN! THEY TOOK THE INKA EMPIRE WITH A FEW HUNDRED MEN! I SAY LET US TAKE *THEM* WITH A FEW HUNDRED MEN!

WE WILL KILL ALL THE SPANIARDS AND GO HOME. YOU CAN BUY YOUR SILVER FROM THE INDIOS.



NO
MATTER HOW
MUCH I CHOP UP
THESE GRASSHOPPERS,
I STILL GET THEIR
LITTLE ARMS AND LEGS
CAUGHT BETWEEN
MY TEETH.

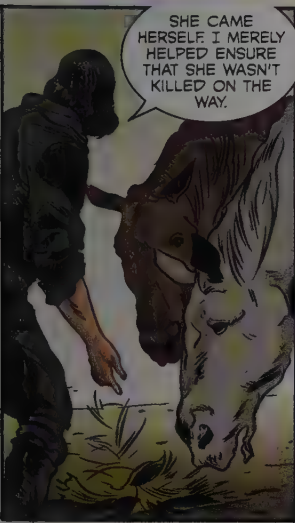
WHY
ARE YOU
LAUGHING?



I WAS THINKING
THAT MY BROTHERS
CREATED THEIR OWN
PROBLEMS. THEY
IMPORTED THE
CIMARRONES WHO
NOW ROB THEIR
SILVER.



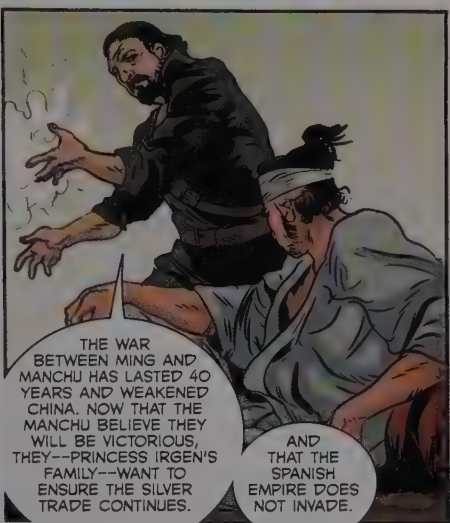
WHY DID
YOU IMPORT
IRGEN?



SHE CAME
HERSELF I MERELY
HELPED ENSURE
THAT SHE WASN'T
KILLED ON THE
WAY.

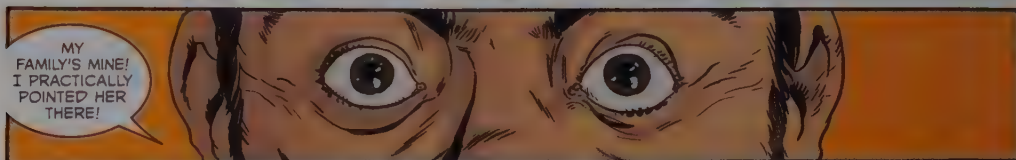
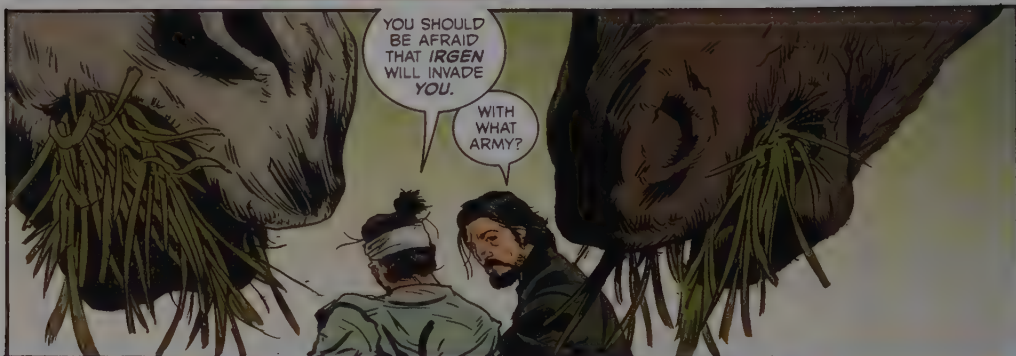


I REMAIN GRATEFUL
FOR YOUR ALLOWING
ME TO OPERATE
WITHOUT THE BURDEN
OF KNOWING WHAT
IS GOING ON.



THE WAR
BETWEEN MING AND
MANCHU HAS LASTED 40
YEARS AND WEAKENED
CHINA. NOW THAT THE
MANCHU BELIEVE THEY
WILL BE VICTORIOUS,
THEY--PRINCESS IRGEN'S
FAMILY--WANT TO
ENSURE THE SILVER
TRADE CONTINUES.

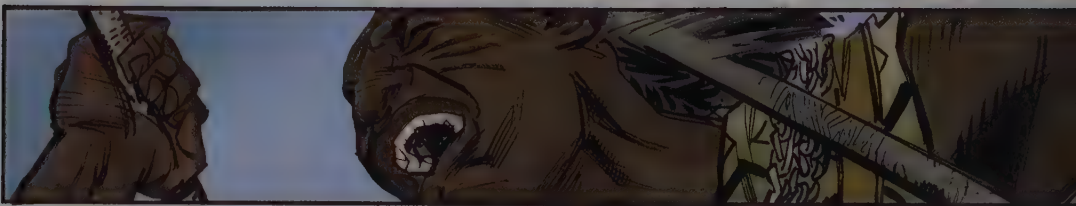
AND
THAT THE
SPANISH
EMPIRE DOES
NOT INVADE.















BELOWDECKS!
DOWN THE
HATCH!



I SAID,
MOVE!



NOW!

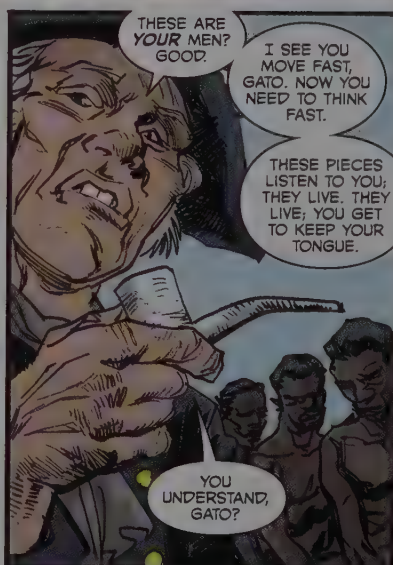


HE...NO
UNDERSTAND,
NONE...SPEAK
YOUR
LANGUAGE



YOU SPEAK
PORTUGUESE?

LITTLE.
FROM
YOUR
PRIESTS.

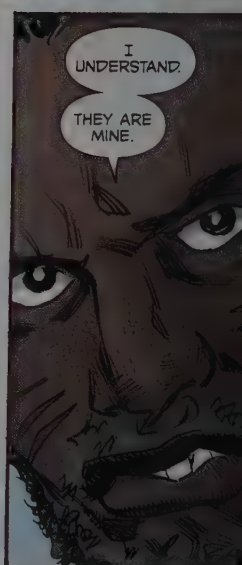


THESE ARE
YOUR MEN?
GOOD.

I SEE YOU
MOVE FAST,
GATO. NOW YOU
NEED TO THINK
FAST.

THESE PIECES
LISTEN TO YOU;
THEY LIVE. THEY
LIVE; YOU GET
TO KEEP YOUR
TONGUE.

YOU
UNDERSTAND,
GATO?



I
UNDERSTAND.

THEY ARE
MINE.

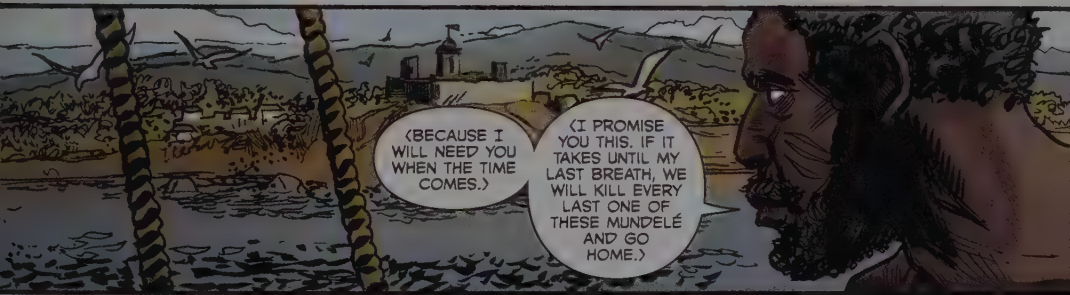


(IT IS TIME TO LEAVE OUR HOMELAND, MY BROTHERS.)

(FOLLOW THEIR ORDERS--GO BELOW.)

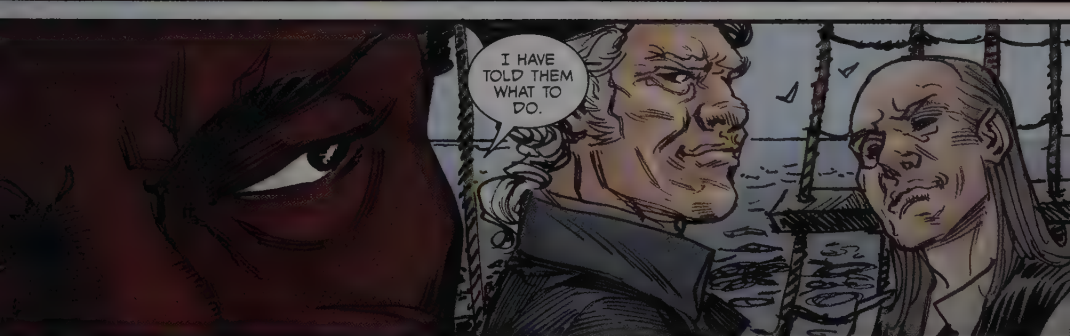


(AS YOUR CAPTAIN, I TELL YOU IT IS YOUR DUTY TO STAY ALIVE.)



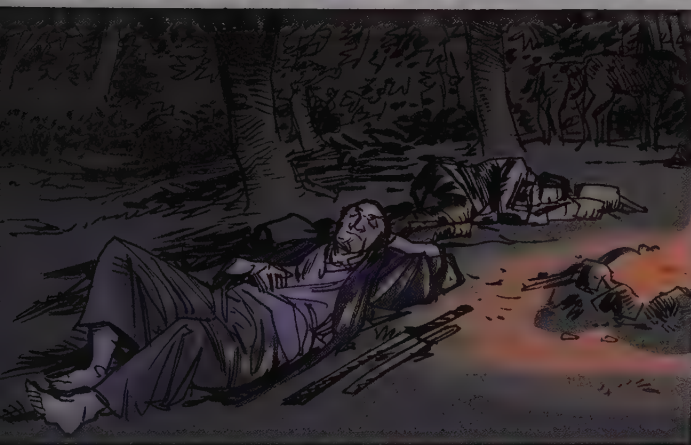
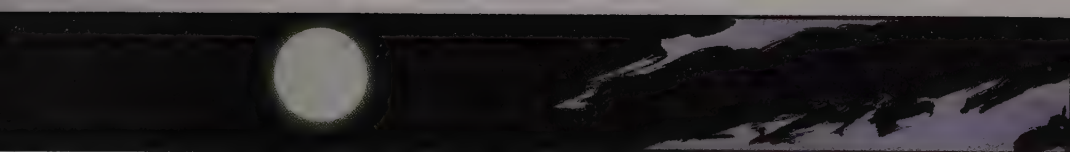
(BECAUSE I WILL NEED YOU WHEN THE TIME COMES.)

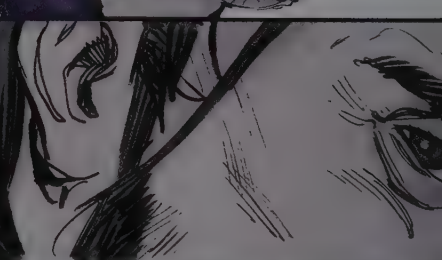
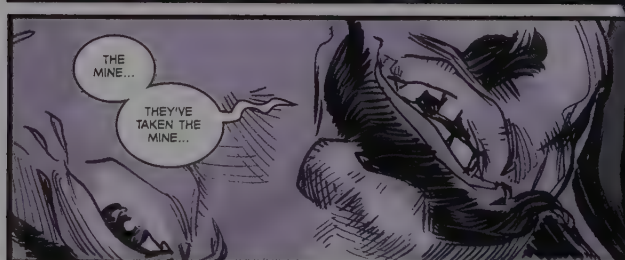
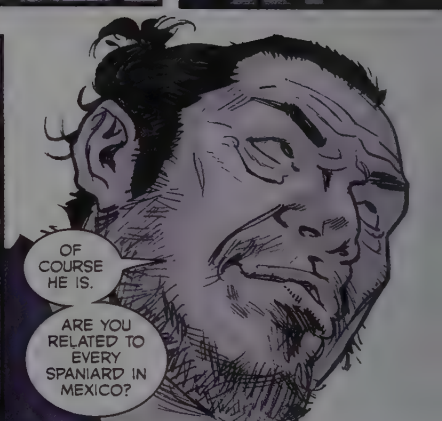
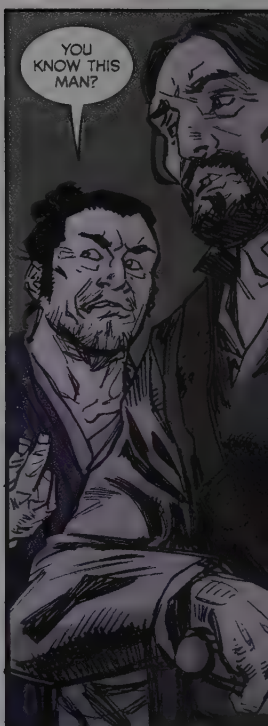
(I PROMISE YOU THIS. IF IT TAKES UNTIL MY LAST BREATH, WE WILL KILL EVERY LAST ONE OF THESE MUNDELE AND GO HOME.)

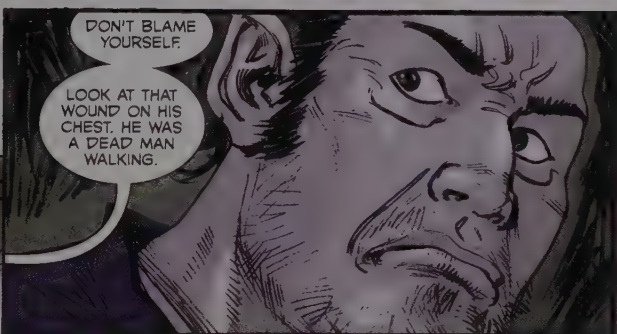


I HAVE TOLD THEM WHAT TO DO.



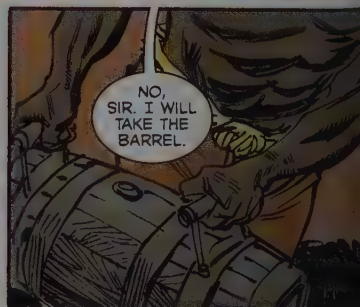
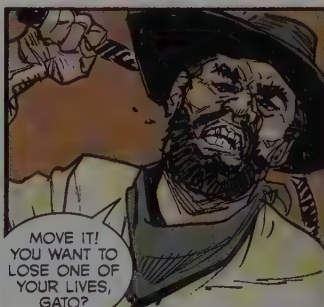








VERACRUZ, 1627 VICEROY AMBROSIO'S PLANTATION

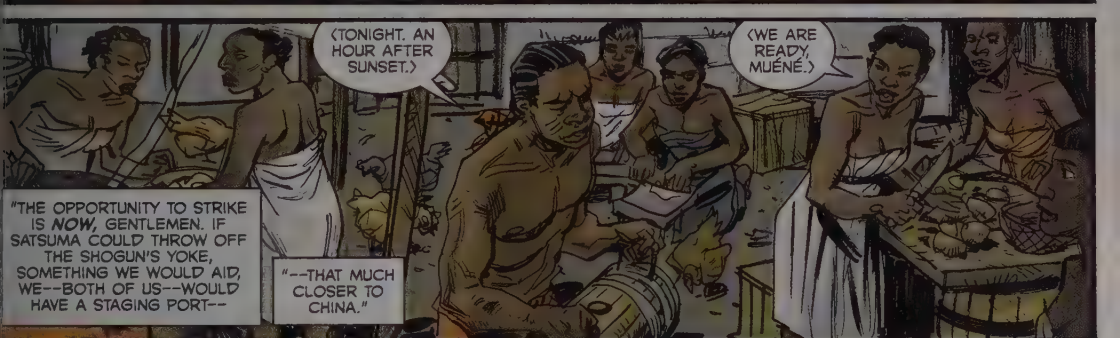




...BORDERS CLOSED. THE SHOGUN WANTS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE CHRISTIAN WORLD.



THE MING ARE LOSING--AGAIN. THEIR ARMIES FLEE SOUTH. BUT THE MANCHU ARE NOT YET IN COMMAND.



<TONIGHT, AN HOUR AFTER SUNSET.>

<WE ARE READY, MUÑE.>

"THE OPPORTUNITY TO STRIKE IS *NOW*, GENTLEMEN. IF SATSUMA COULD THROW OFF THE SHOGUN'S YOKE, SOMETHING WE WOULD AID, WE--BOTH OF US--WOULD HAVE A STAGING PORT--"

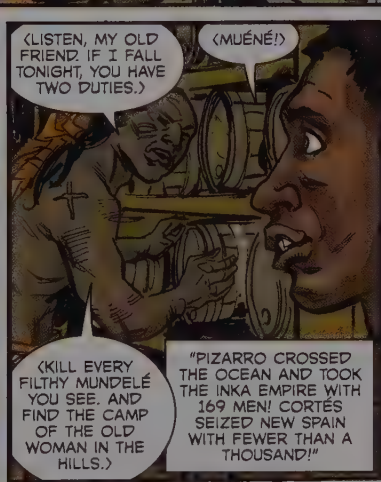
"--THAT MUCH CLOSER TO CHINA."



<I'VE BROUGHT SOME FUEL FOR TONIGHT'S FIRE.>

<SO I SEE, MUÑE.>

"SEÑOR AMBROSIO, THIS IS FOLLY. CHINA IS HUGE AND THREE THOUSAND LEAGUES AWAY."



<LISTEN, MY OLD FRIEND. IF I FALL TONIGHT, YOU HAVE TWO DUTIES.>

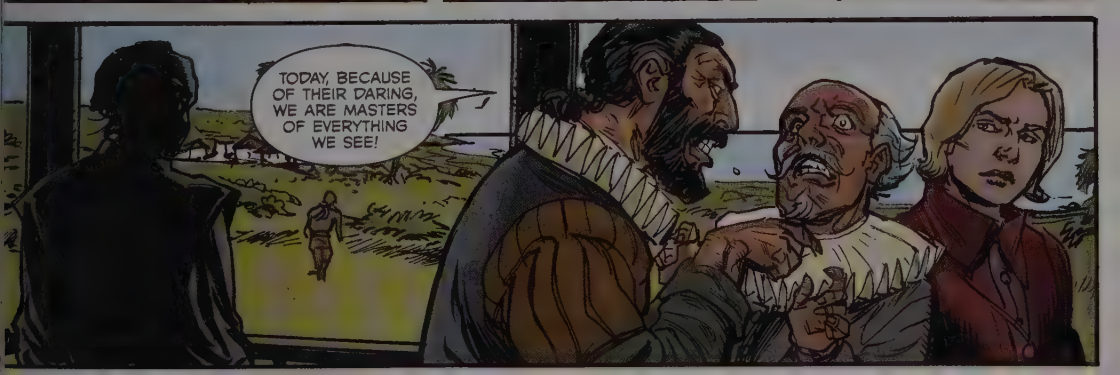
<MUÑE!>

<KILL EVERY FILTHY MUNDELE YOU SEE. AND FIND THE CAMP OF THE OLD WOMAN IN THE HILLS.>

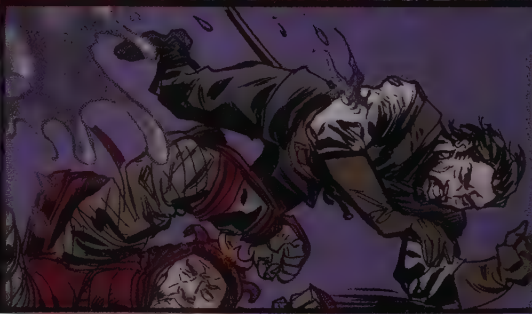
"PIZARRO CROSSED THE OCEAN AND TOOK THE INKA EMPIRE WITH 169 MEN! CORTÉS SEIZED NEW SPAIN WITH FEWER THAN A THOUSAND!"



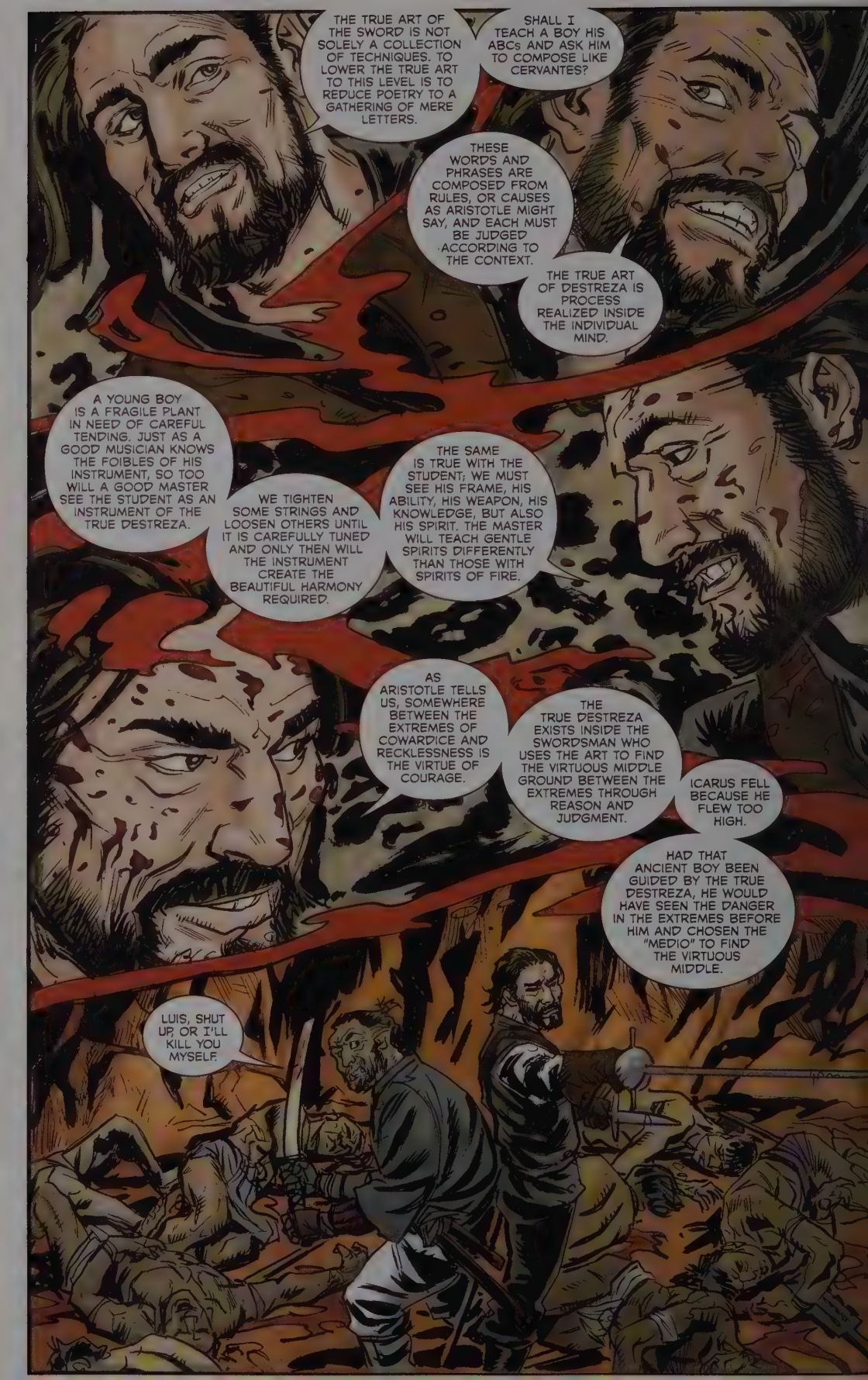
WHERE WOULD WE BE IF THEY HAD LISTENED TO YOU?!



TODAY, BECAUSE OF THEIR DARING, WE ARE MASTERS OF EVERYTHING WE SEE!







THE TRUE ART OF THE SWORD IS NOT SOLELY A COLLECTION OF TECHNIQUES. TO LOWER THE TRUE ART TO THIS LEVEL IS TO REDUCE POETRY TO A GATHERING OF MERE LETTERS.

SHALL I TEACH A BOY HIS ABCs AND ASK HIM TO COMPOSE LIKE CERVANTES?

THESE WORDS AND PHRASES ARE COMPOSED FROM RULES, OR CAUSES AS ARISTOTLE MIGHT SAY, AND EACH MUST BE JUDGED ACCORDING TO THE CONTEXT.

THE TRUE ART OF DESTREZA IS PROCESS REALIZED INSIDE THE INDIVIDUAL MIND.

A YOUNG BOY IS A FRAGILE PLANT IN NEED OF CAREFUL TENDING. JUST AS A GOOD MUSICIAN KNOWS THE FOIBLES OF HIS INSTRUMENT, SO TOO WILL A GOOD MASTER SEE THE STUDENT AS AN INSTRUMENT OF THE TRUE DESTREZA.

WE TIGHTEN SOME STRINGS AND LOOSEN OTHERS UNTIL IT IS CAREFULLY TUNED AND ONLY THEN WILL THE INSTRUMENT CREATE THE BEAUTIFUL HARMONY REQUIRED.

THE SAME IS TRUE WITH THE STUDENT; WE MUST SEE HIS FRAME, HIS ABILITY, HIS WEAPON, HIS KNOWLEDGE, BUT ALSO HIS SPIRIT. THE MASTER WILL TEACH GENTLE SPIRITS DIFFERENTLY THAN THOSE WITH SPIRITS OF FIRE.

AS ARISTOTLE TELLS US, SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE EXTREMES OF COWARDICE AND RECKLESSNESS IS THE VIRTUE OF COURAGE.

THE TRUE DESTREZA EXISTS INSIDE THE SWORDSMAN WHO USES THE ART TO FIND THE VIRTUOUS MIDDLE GROUND BETWEEN THE EXTREMES THROUGH REASON AND JUDGMENT.

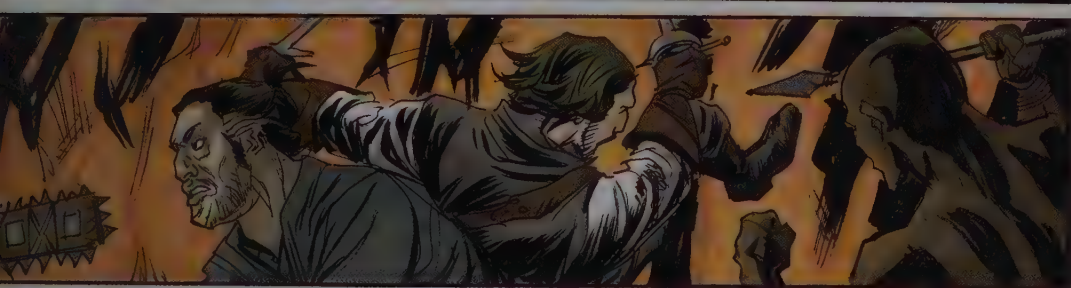
ICARUS FELL BECAUSE HE FLEW TOO HIGH.

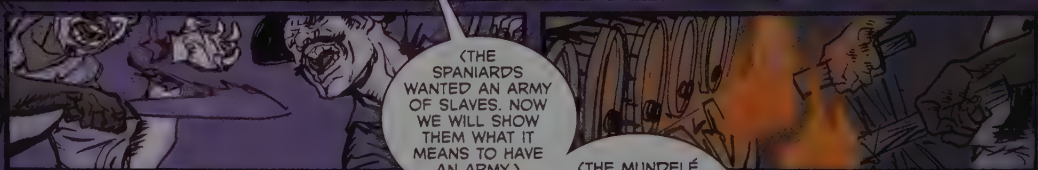
HAD THAT ANCIENT BOY BEEN GUIDED BY THE TRUE DESTREZA, HE WOULD HAVE SEEN THE DANGER IN THE EXTREMES BEFORE HIM AND CHOSEN THE "MEDIO" TO FIND THE VIRTUOUS MIDDLE.

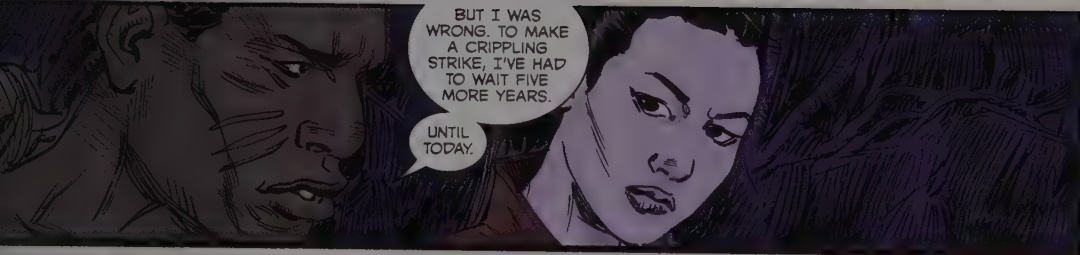
LUIS, SHUT UP, OR I'LL KILL YOU MYSELF









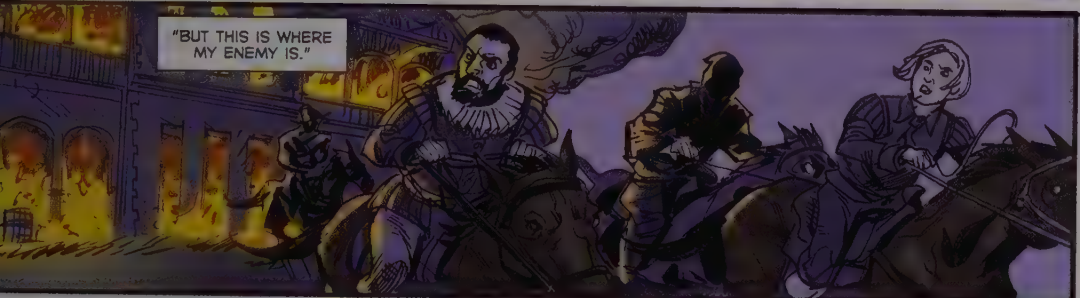


BUT I WAS
WRONG. TO MAKE
A CRIPPLING
STRIKE, I'VE HAD
TO WAIT FIVE
MORE YEARS.

UNTIL
TODAY.



"THIS IS NOT MY
LAND, IRGEN.

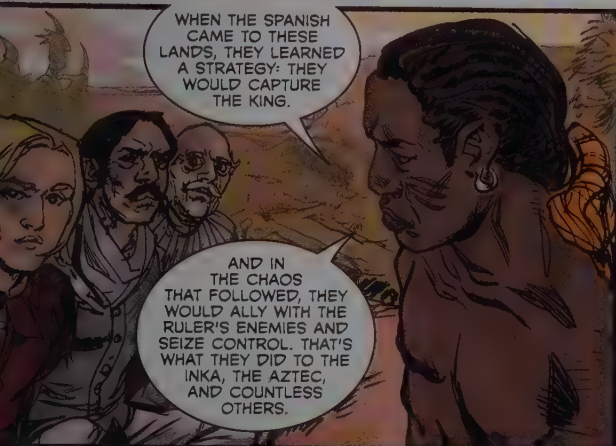


"BUT THIS IS WHERE
MY ENEMY IS."



I WILL ACCEPT YOUR
OFFER OF A SHIP AND
CREW FOR THE VOYAGE
HOME. BUT ONLY AFTER
I MAKE SURE HE
CAN ENSLAVE NO
OTHERS.

HOW? THESE
ARE MERE
SERVANTS OF
THE VICEROY.



WHEN THE SPANISH
CAME TO THESE
LANDS, THEY LEARNED
A STRATEGY: THEY
WOULD CAPTURE
THE KING.

AND IN
THE CHAOS
THAT FOLLOWED, THEY
WOULD ALLY WITH THE
RULER'S ENEMIES AND
SEIZE CONTROL. THAT'S
WHAT THEY DID TO THE
INKA, THE AZTEC,
AND COUNTLESS
OTHERS.



IT IS TIME FOR US
TO DO THE SAME TO
THE SPANISH.



GO
TO MEXICO
CITY AND
CAPTURE THE
VICEROY?

HE'LL
BE HEAVILY
GUARDED. ALMOST
IMPOSSIBLE TO
GET TO.



ALMOST
IMPOSSIBLE.

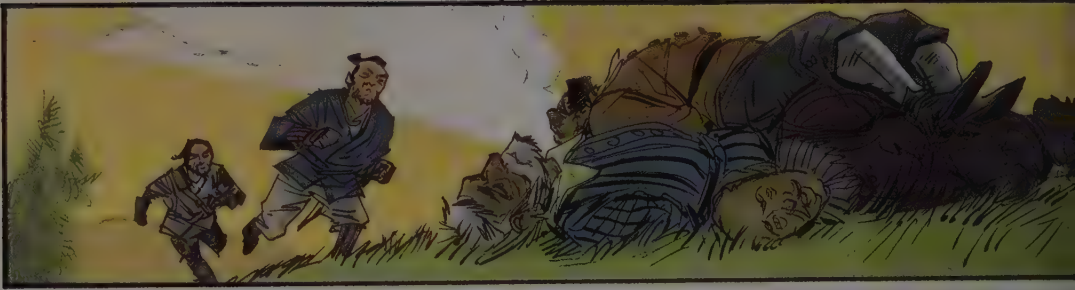


BUT WE
HAVE A WAY
TO GET THROUGH
THE GATES, A
GUIDE WHO WILL
GET US PAST THE
VICEROY'S
GUARDS.



YOU'RE
GOING TO
TAKE US TO
YOUR FATHER,
BOY.





THESE
WOUNDS ARE
FRESH. SHE
CAN'T BE
FAR.



WE
CAN STILL
CATCH
HER.



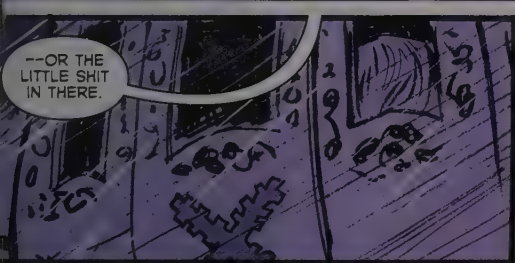
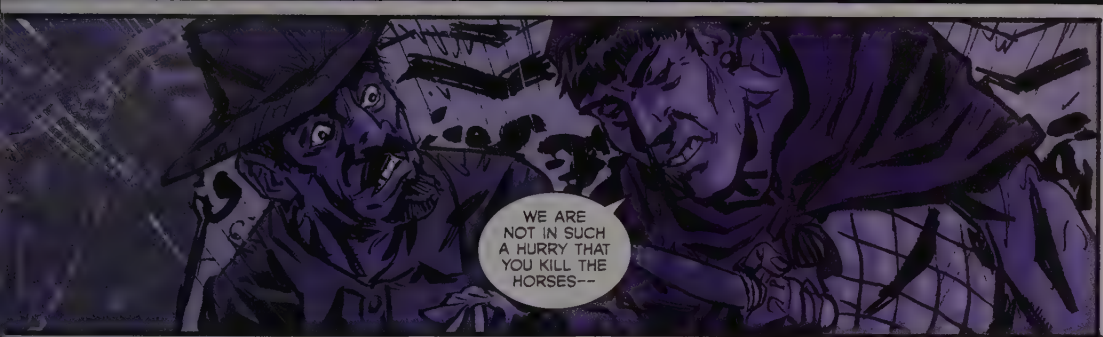
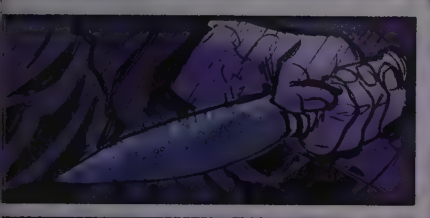
I KNOW
WHERE THEY
ALL ARE
GOING.

MEXICO
CITY.



CIMARRONIN







ENOUGH!

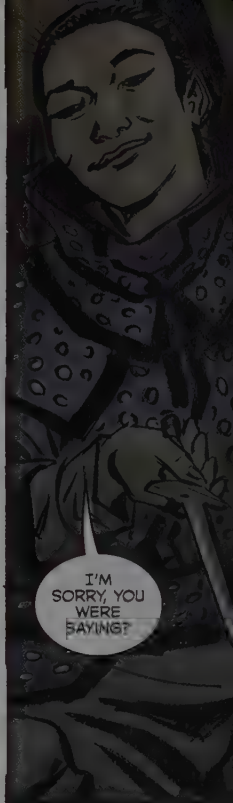


IRGEN--
LEAVE HIM
BE!

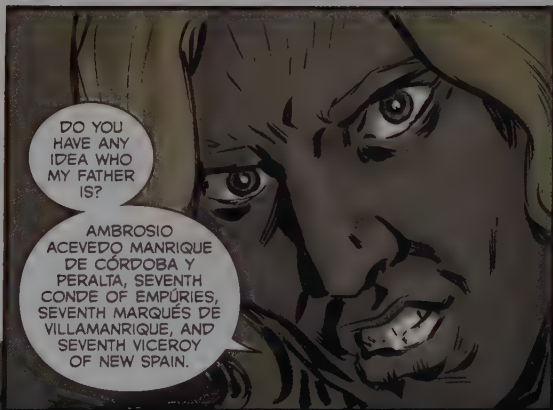
YOU--
LITTLE SHIT--
SHUT UP!



CATUMBUQUE.
LET HIM SPEAK.



I'M
SORRY, YOU
WERE
SAYING?



DO YOU
HAVE ANY
IDEA WHO
MY FATHER
IS?

AMBROSIO
ACEVEDO MANRIQUE
DE CORDOBA Y
PERALTA, SEVENTH
CONDE OF EMPURIES,
SEVENTH MARQUÉS DE
VILLAMANRIQUE, AND
SEVENTH VICEROY
OF NEW SPAIN.



IS THAT
ALL? MINE IS
LONGER.

YOUR
WHAT? WHAT
IS LONGER?



I AM IRGEN,
EASTERN JEWEL OF
THE AISIN GORO, FOURTH
DAUGHTER OF YANGGINU,
BEILE OF THE YEHE CLAN,
KUNGNU TO THE IMPERIAL
COURT, PRINCESS UNDER
HEAVEN, GUARDIANESS
OF THE MANCHU
NATION--

"--AND YOU
WOULD NOT
WANT TO MEET
MY FAMILY."

NORTH OF THE GREAT WALL, 1630.





WHY ARE YOU NOT AT TRAINING?

I AM TRAINING.



THE SAMAN TAITAI ARE WAITING.

SO?



SHE IS RIGHT, LITTLE SISTER.

PLEASE, AJIGE--

PEOPLE ARE WAITING FOR ME, TOO.



I UNDERSTAND, IRGEN. YOU DON'T WANT TO BE AN ELEGANT LADY. YOU DON'T WANT TO BE A WIFE.

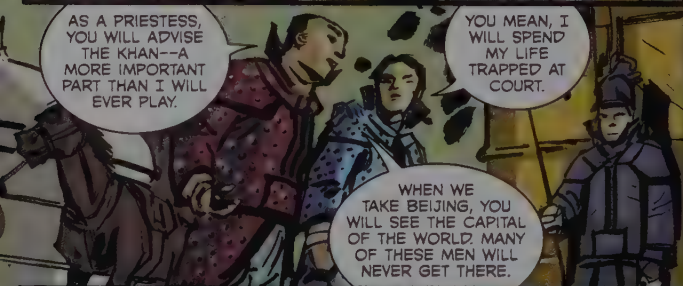
THEN BE A PRIESTESS! THAT'S WHAT YOU CHOSE.



I AM AT COURT, PRACTICING HOW TO GRIND BARK FOR THE SIDUI FUREN, AND YOU--YOU ARE BEING SENT ON MISSIONS THAT--

WHAT? HOW DID YOU--

--THAT YOU WON'T EVEN TELL ME ABOUT!



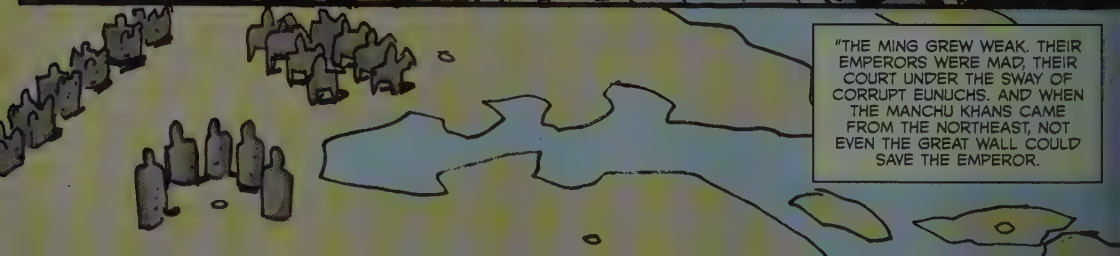
AS A PRIESTESS, YOU WILL ADVISE THE KHAN--A MORE IMPORTANT PART THAN I WILL EVER PLAY.

YOU MEAN, I WILL SPEND MY LIFE TRAPPED AT COURT.

WHEN WE TAKE BEIJING, YOU WILL SEE THE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD. MANY OF THESE MEN WILL NEVER GET THERE.

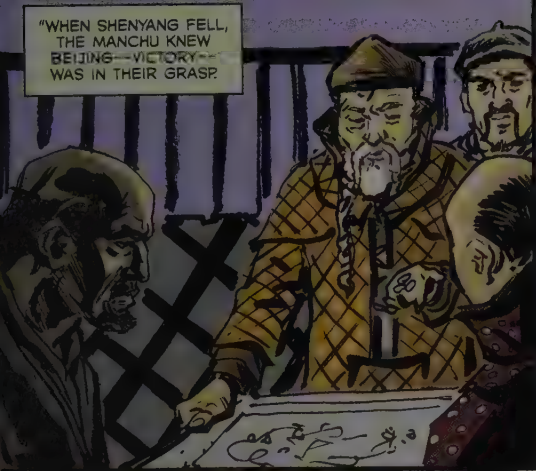


NOW I MUST GO. AND SO MUST YOU.



"THE MING GREW WEAK. THEIR EMPERORS WERE MAD. THEIR COURT UNDER THE SWAY OF CORRUPT EUNUCHS. AND WHEN THE MANCHU KHANS CAME FROM THE NORTHEAST, NOT EVEN THE GREAT WALL COULD SAVE THE EMPEROR.

"WHEN SHENYANG FELL,
THE MANCHU KNEW
BEIJING--VICTORY--
WAS IN THEIR GRASP.



"THE LIFELOOD
OF THE MING WAS
SPANISH SILVER.



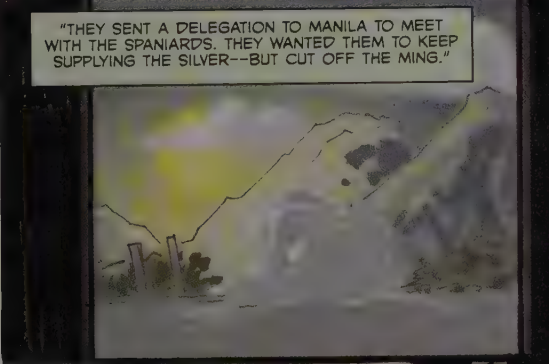
"THE MANCHU COULD
BREAK THE MING ARMY,
BUT UNLESS THE SILVER
TRADE CONTINUED THEY
COULD NOT RULE.



"THE MANCHU HAD ALSO HEARD RUMORS
THAT THE DESPERATE MING WERE
THINKING OF ALLYING WITH SPAIN AGAINST
THE MANCHU. OR THAT SPAIN WANTED TO
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CHAOS IN JAPAN.
TO INVADE CHINA FROM BASES IN JAPAN.

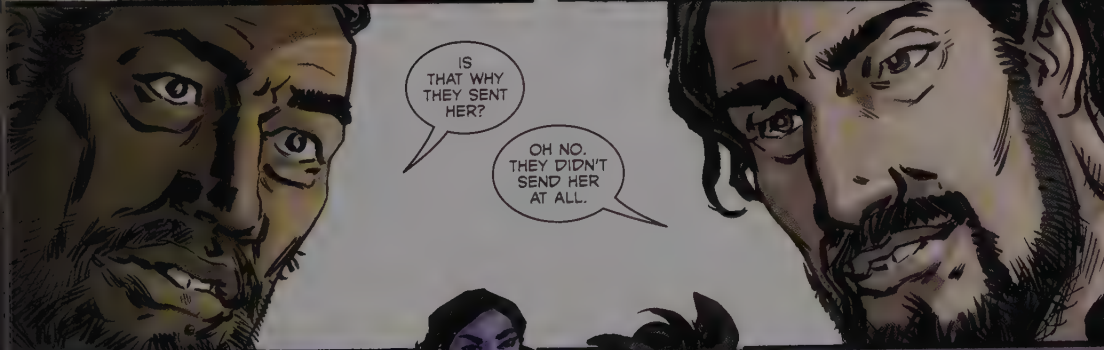


"THEY SENT A DELEGATION TO MANILA TO MEET
WITH THE SPANIARDS. THEY WANTED THEM TO KEEP
SUPPLYING THE SILVER--BUT CUT OFF THE MING."

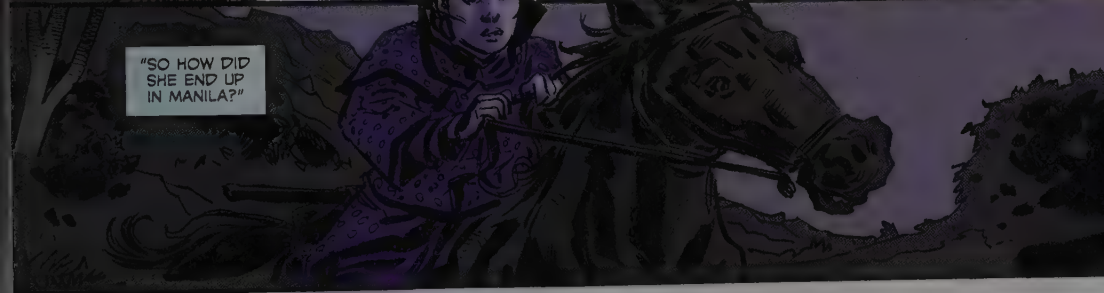


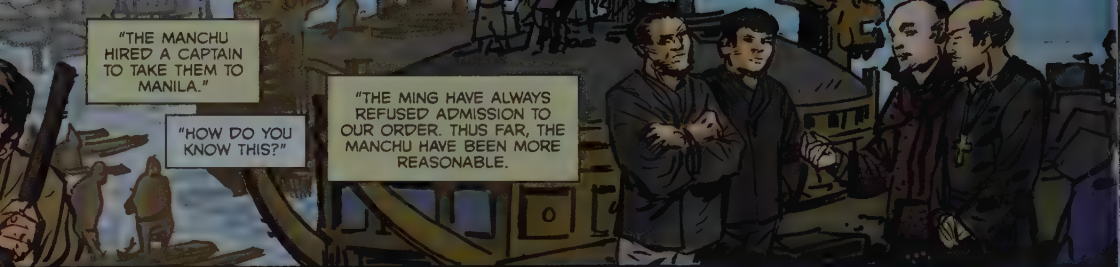
IS
THAT WHY
THEY SENT
HER?

OH NO.
THEY DIDN'T
SEND HER
AT ALL.



"SO HOW DID
SHE END UP
IN MANILA?"





"THE MANCHU
HIRED A CAPTAIN
TO TAKE THEM TO
MANILA."

"HOW DO YOU
KNOW THIS?"

"THE MING HAVE ALWAYS
REFUSED ADMISSION TO
OUR ORDER. THUS FAR, THE
MANCHU HAVE BEEN MORE
REASONABLE."



"WE HAD EYES."

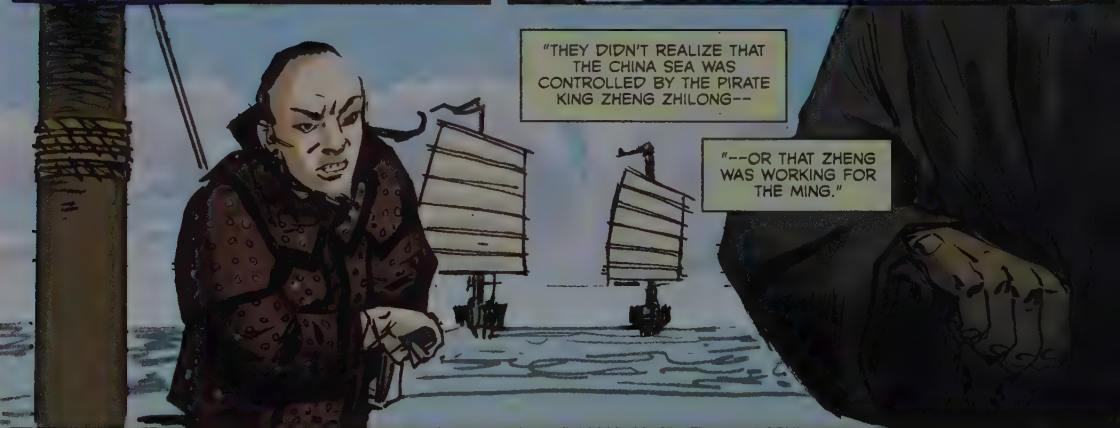
"BUT THEY
COULDN'T SEE
EVERYTHING. WE
DON'T KNOW
FOR INSTANCE--"



"--HOW IRGEN
MANAGED TO ATTACH
HERSELF TO THE
DELEGATION."



"THE MANCHU WERE ACCUSTOMED TO
ACTING ON LAND, NOT OPEN WATER."



"THEY DIDN'T REALIZE THAT
THE CHINA SEA WAS
CONTROLLED BY THE PIRATE
KING ZHENG ZHILONG--"

"--OR THAT ZHENG
WAS WORKING FOR
THE MING."





"WHAT HAPPENED?"



"I DON'T KNOW--
WE LOST OUR EYES."



"I HEARD
LOTS OF
STORIES."



"BUT ALL OF THEM
ARE UNBELIEVABLE."



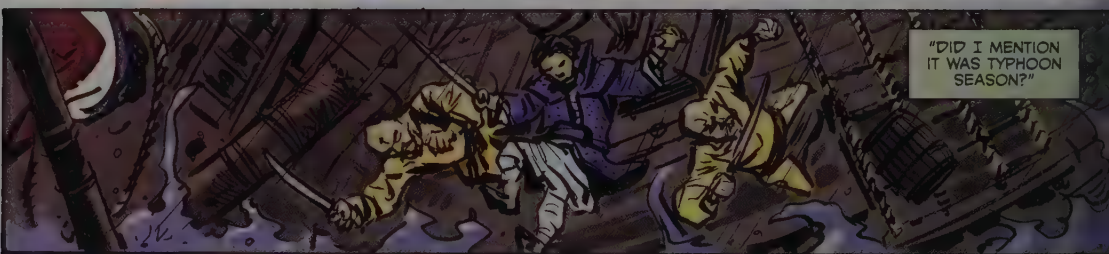
"THE MING
HAD A
BOUNTY ON
HER HEAD.



"THE PIRATE KING
WANTED REVENGE.
SO HE PUT A PRICE
ON HER, TOO.



"EVERY UNDESIRABLE IN
THE CHINA SEA WANTED
TO COLLECT.



"DID I MENTION
IT WAS TYPHOON
SEASON?"



"STILL, SHE
SOMEHOW
GOT TO
MANILA--



"--WHERE YOU, LUIS, HELPED
HER GET TO NEW SPAIN.
WHERE SHE PROMPTLY
ESCAPED YOUR CONTROL.

"THIS PLAN OF
HERS CAN'T
POSSIBLY WORK."



NO?

AND
YET,
HERE WE
ARE.

AND THERE
ARE THE
VICEROY'S
CARRIAGES.

WHERE
ARE THE OTHER
CIMARRONES?

THERE CAN'T
BE MORE THAN A
DOZEN IN THE
CARRIAGES.

MAKE
WAY! MAKE
WAY!

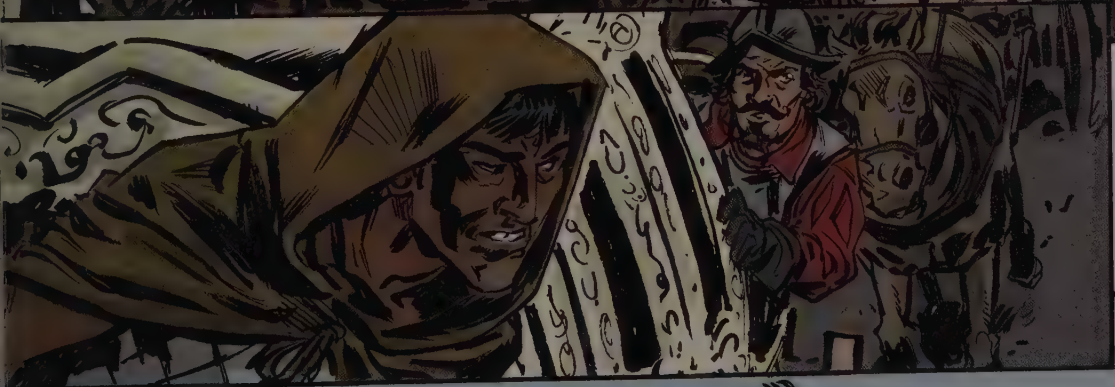
I CARRY
PASSENGERS
FOR THE
VICEROY!

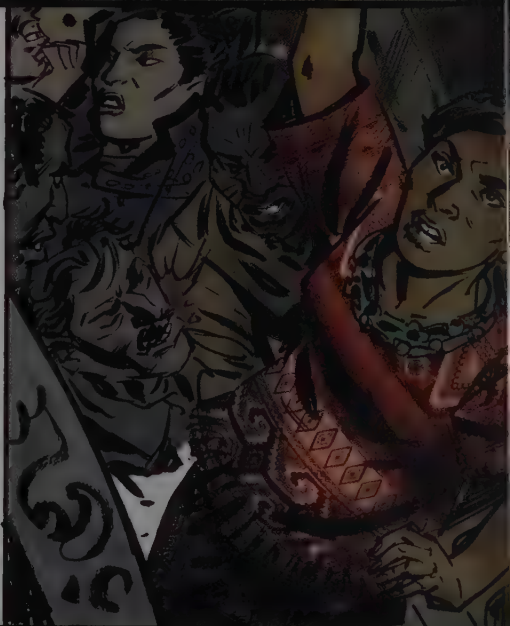
WHO?
WHO SEEKS
TO VISIT THE
VICEROY?

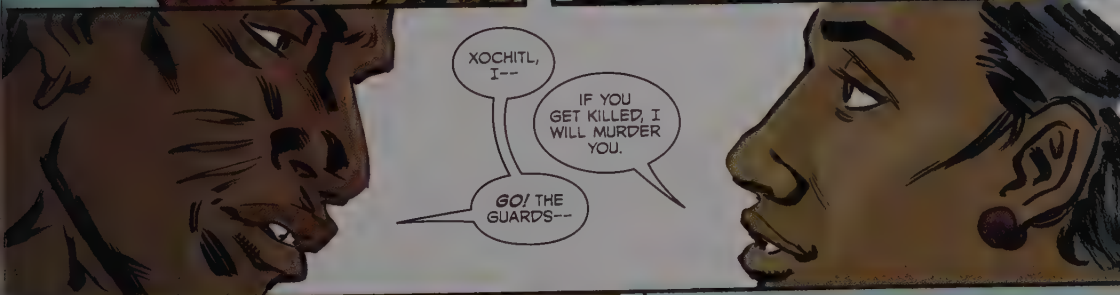
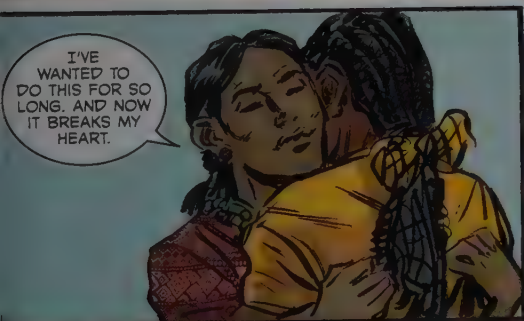
HIS SON--
AN URGENT
MESSAGE
FROM THE
MINE!

ARE
YOU GOING TO
LET US THROUGH?
EVERY MOMENT
COUNTS. WE MUST
INFORM THE
VICEROY!

MAKE
WAY FOR THE
VICEROY'S
SON!



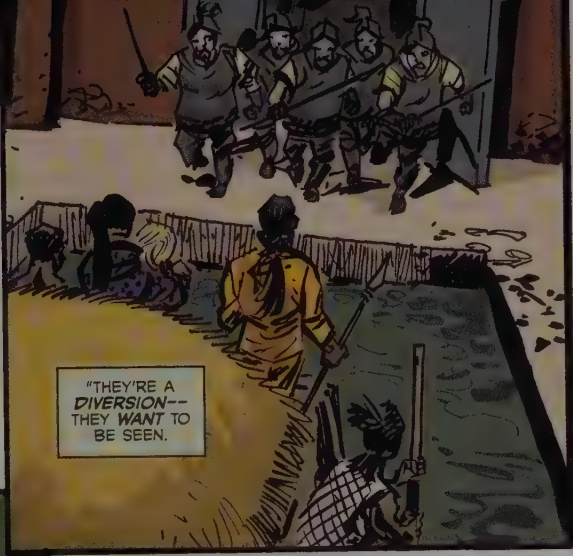








"LUIS! THE
ONES GOING
INTO THE
CITY--!"

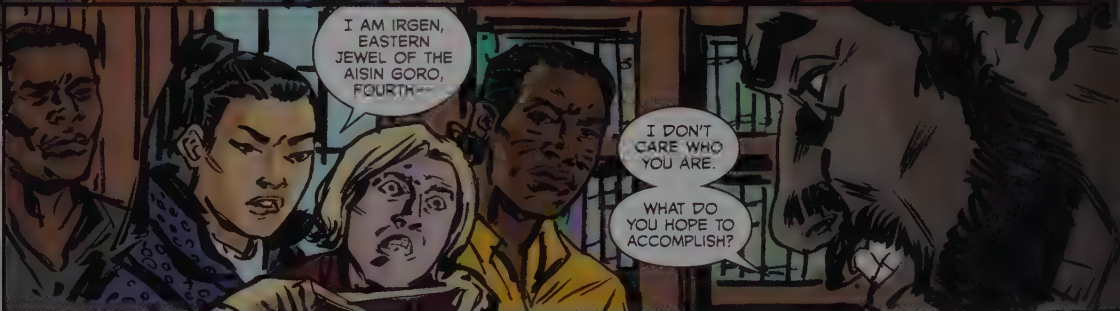


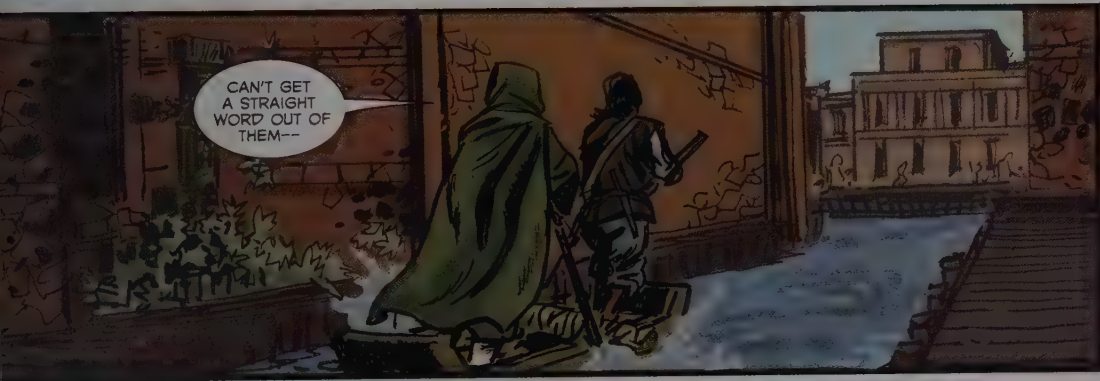
"THEY'RE A
DIVERSION--
THEY WANT TO
BE SEEN."



COMING?













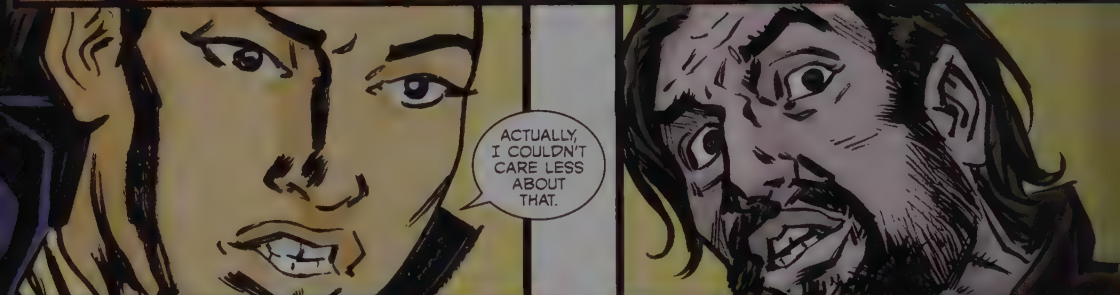
QUICKLY,
XOCHITL. NOW
WOULD BE A
GOOD TIME.



YOUR EXCELLENCY,
PLEASE DON'T LET
THE GENESIS OF THIS
MEETING CLOUD THE
MESSAGE THIS ENVOY
IS HERE TO
DELIVER.



"YOU WANT ACCESS TO THE
EAST. THAT IS NO SECRET, IS
IT? LISTEN TO WHAT SHE
HAS TO SAY. PERHAPS THERE
IS AN OPPORTUNITY HERE."



ACTUALLY,
I COULDN'T
CARE LESS
ABOUT
THAT.



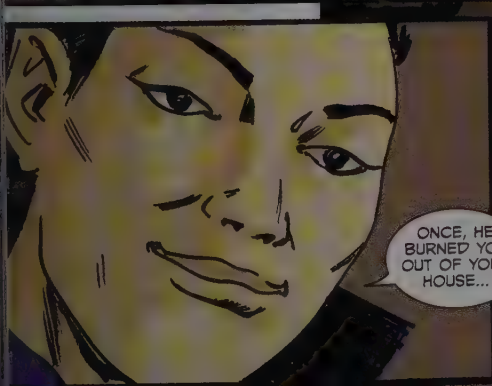
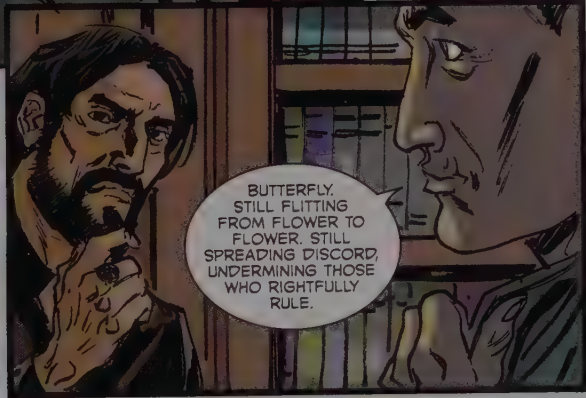
YOUR BROTHER SAID
HE WAS BRINGING
MEN FROM MANILA--
RONIN--TO GUARD
THE SILVER
CARAVANS.

IS *THIS*
ALL THAT HE
MANAGED?

DO NOT
BLAME MY
BROTHER. I
TAKE FULL
RESPONSIBILITY
FOR THIS
ONE.



I CERTAINLY
UNDERSTAND THE
IMPULSE, THOUGH. I
ACQUIRED ONE OF
MY OWN.





Chapter Six







TIME FOR
US TO TALK,
GON-SAN.
HONESTLY.



WHENEVER
YOU SAY THAT,
I KNOW THAT
WHAT'S
COMING NEXT
IS A LIE--

--OR AT
LEAST TOTAL
BULLSHIT.

YOU
SHOULD
GO BACK
TO JAPAN.

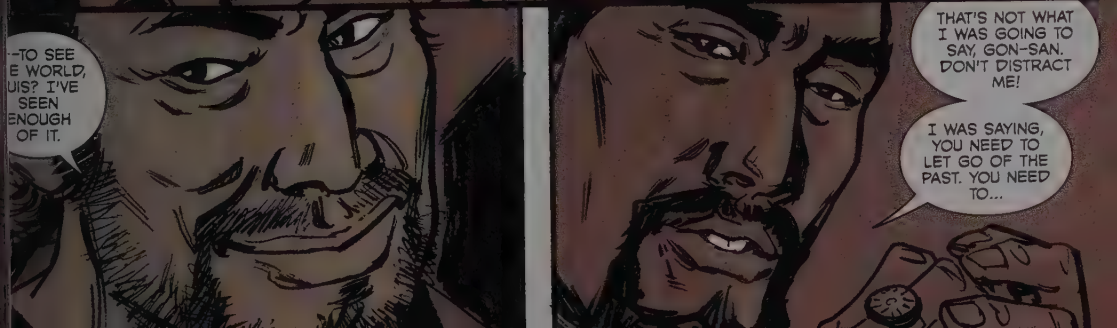
I SEE.
YOU'RE
GOING FOR
BULLSHIT.



IT IS YOUR
HOME! IT'S
WHERE YOU
BELONG!

NO
THIS IS
WHERE I
BELONG.

THIS
IS YOUR
CAGE. YOU
NEED--

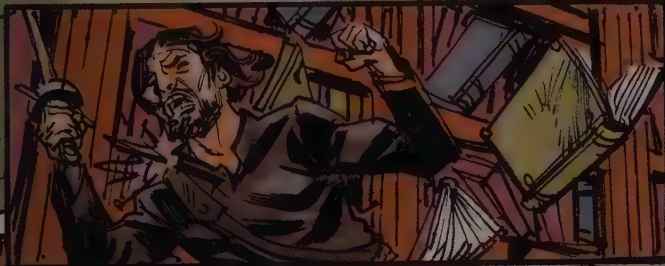


--TO SEE
THE WORLD,
GON-SAN? I'VE
SEEN
ENOUGH
OF IT.

THAT'S NOT WHAT
I WAS GOING TO
SAY, GON-SAN.
DON'T DISTRACT
ME!

I WAS SAYING,
YOU NEED TO
LET GO OF THE
PAST. YOU NEED
TO...







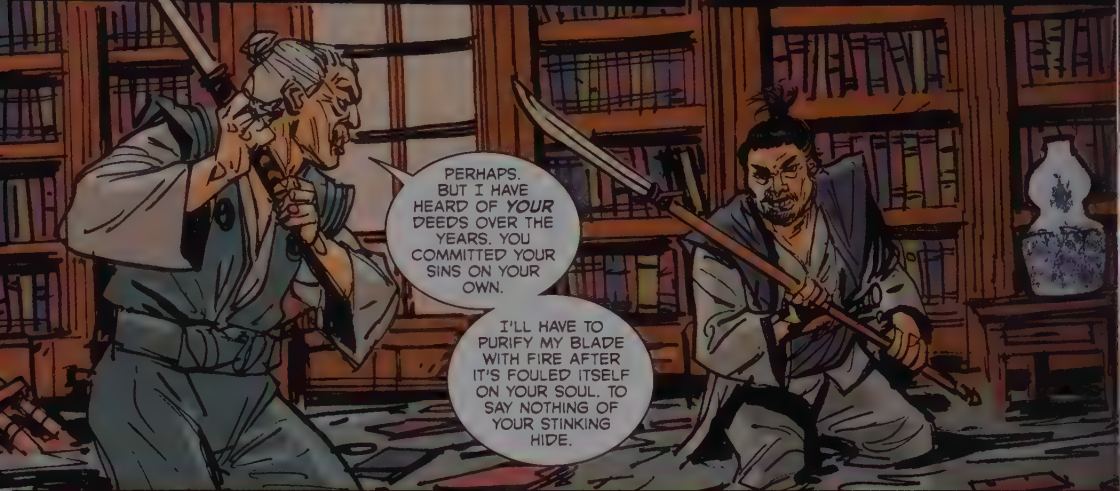




RONIN
SCUM--STILL
WANDERING ABOUT
LIKE A STRAY DOG,
WITH NO LOYALTY
OR MASTER?



LOYALTY?
YOU'D CUT A BABY
IN TWO IF YOUR
PRECIOUS LORD
ORDERED IT.
ちくしょう!

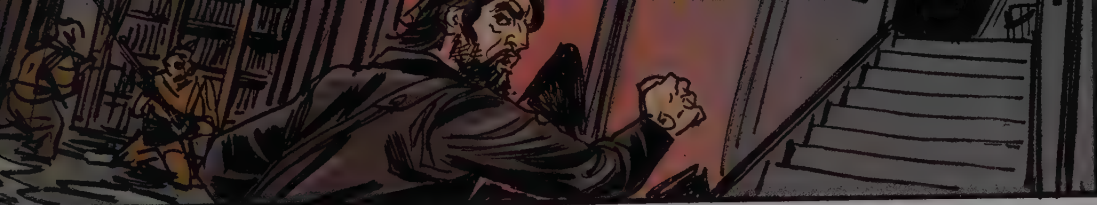


PERHAPS,
BUT I HAVE
HEARD OF *YOUR*
DEEDS OVER THE
YEARS. YOU
COMMITTED YOUR
SINS ON YOUR
OWN.

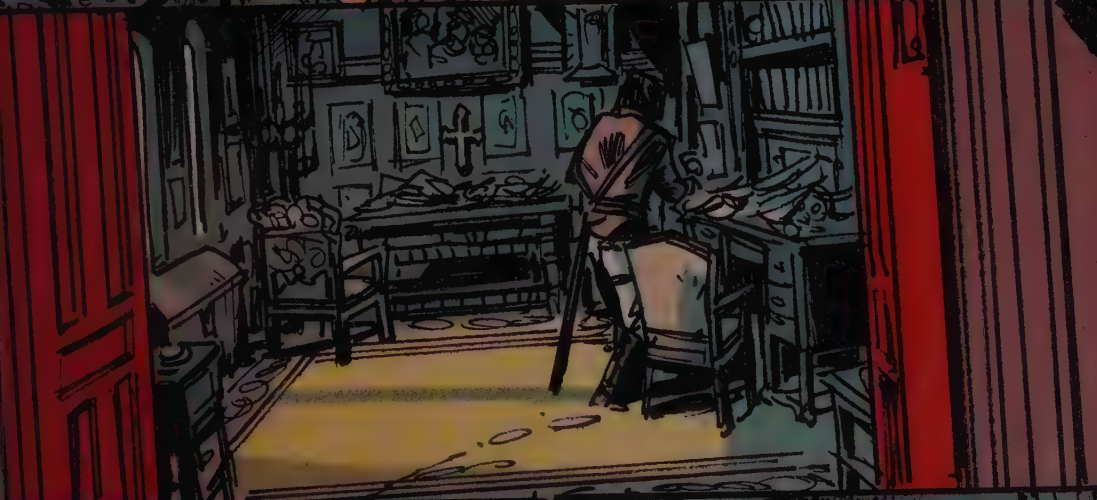
I'LL HAVE TO
PURIFY MY BLADE
WITH FIRE AFTER
IT'S FOULED ITSELF
ON YOUR SOUL. TO
SAY NOTHING OF
YOUR STINKING
HIDE.



WHAT
BLADE?



INTERESTING.



¡AMALDICIÓN!



LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?

A BAG OF SILVER, PERHAPS?

AH, A JOKE FROM THE MANCHU PRINCESS. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD READ THE GREAT BOOK OF THE WEST.



THERE IS A LOT ABOUT ME YOU DON'T KNOW.



YES, THERE IS MYSTERY EVERYWHERE, ISN'T THERE?



IS THAT
WHAT THIS
IS ALL
ABOUT?



WERE YOU
EXPECTING
SOMETHING
ELSE?



LIKE: "MY
NAME IS LUIS
MANUEL PÉREZ
DE GUZMÁN.
YOU KILLED
MY FATHER.
PREPARE
TO--"

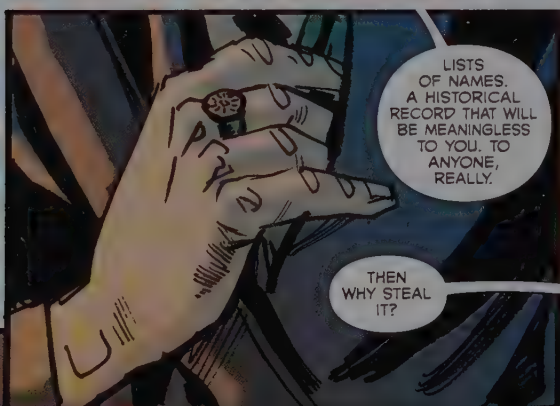


AH, A JOKE
FROM THE
SCHEMING
JESUIT.

I AM
DELIGHTED
TO AMUSE
YOU.



WHAT
IS THAT
BOOK?



LISTS
OF NAMES.
A HISTORICAL
RECORD THAT WILL
BE MEANINGLESS
TO YOU. TO
ANYONE, REALLY.

THEN
WHY STEAL
IT?



STEAL IT?
THE VICEROY
STOLE IT...



...I'M JUST
TAKING IT
BACK.



WERE YOU EVER GOING TO TELL US?

TELL YOU ABOUT WHAT? HONESTLY, THE--

THAT WORD SHOULD NEVER COME OUT OF YOUR MOUTH.



AND YOU? YOU ARE SOME MODEL OF PROBITY?

I BROUGHT YOU HERE AND YOU JOIN THE CIMARRONES?



YOU BROUGHT ME HERE?

YOU WANTED TO HELP YOUR FAMILY. I BROUGHT YOU TO THE VERY HEART OF NEW SPAIN.



I BROUGHT MYSELF HERE.

AND THEN YOU SAID "NO." YOU TURNED YOUR BACK ON YOUR FAMILY AND JOINED... THEM.



YOU AND YOUR 倭寇 FRIEND WERE OUTMATCHED BY THE CIMARRONES FROM THE VERY FIRST TIME WE ENCOUNTERED THEM.

HAVE YOU GIVEN UP ON YOUR FAMILY?



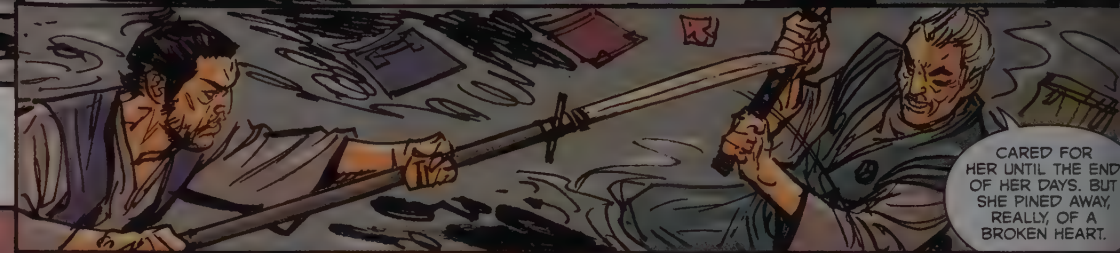
NEVER!



YOU AND I ARE MORE ALIKE THAN YOU REALIZE, PRINCESS.



WE
KEPT OUR
PROMISE
ABOUT YOUR
MOTHER.

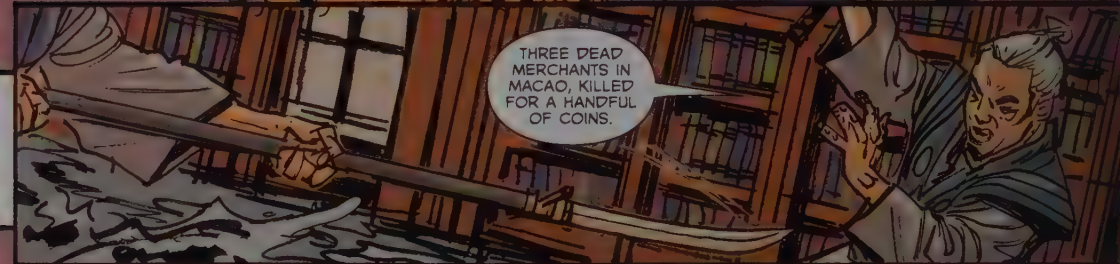


CARED FOR
HER UNTIL THE END
OF HER DAYS, BUT
SHE PINED AWAY,
REALLY, OF A
BROKEN HEART.

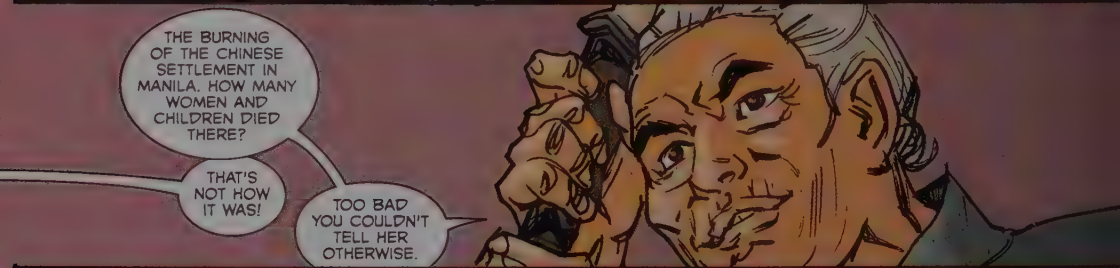


SHE WONDERED IF
YOU WERE DEAD, BUT
THE RUMORS SAID
OTHERWISE.

SATSUMA
HAD EARS
EVERYWHERE,
AND WHAT THEY
HEARD CAME
BACK TO HER.



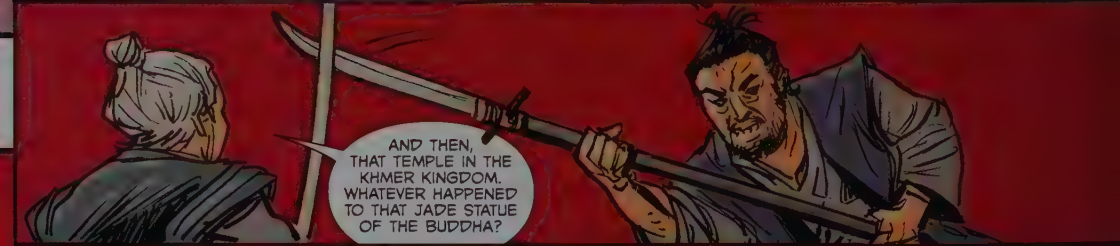
THREE DEAD
MERCHANTS IN
MACAO, KILLED
FOR A HANDFUL
OF COINS.



THE BURNING
OF THE CHINESE
SETTLEMENT IN
MANILA. HOW MANY
WOMEN AND
CHILDREN DIED
THERE?

THAT'S
NOT HOW
IT WAS!

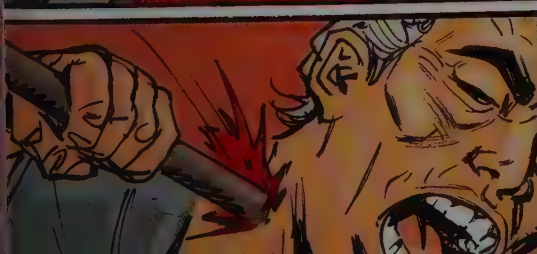
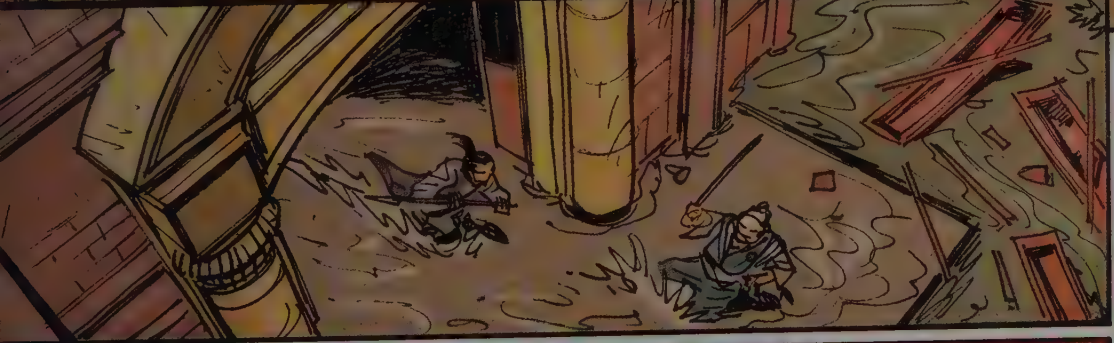
TOO BAD
YOU COULDN'T
TELL HER
OTHERWISE.

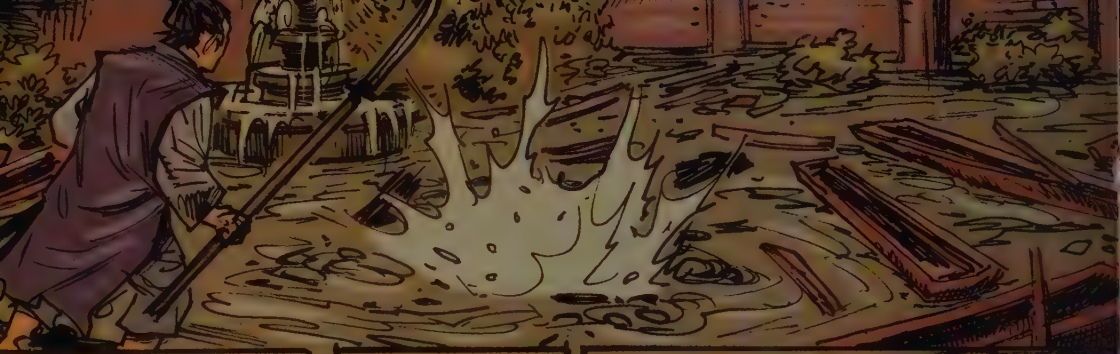


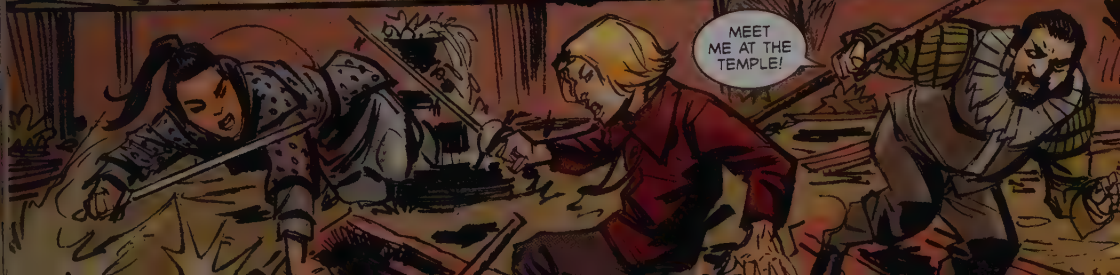
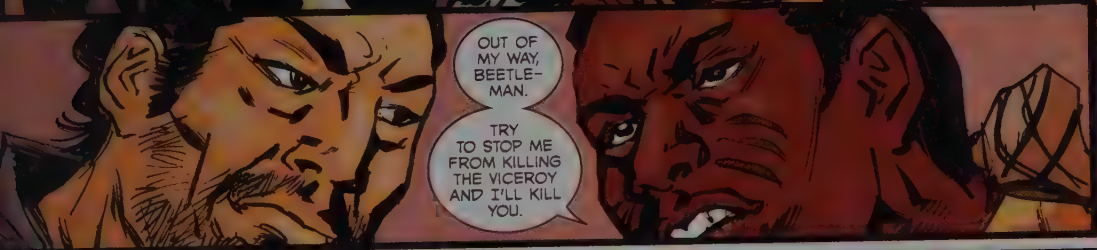
AND THEN,
THAT TEMPLE IN THE
KHMER KINGDOM.
WHATEVER HAPPENED
TO THAT JADE STATUE
OF THE BUDDHA?



SHUT UP,
FORTUNATE SON!
BORN IN THE
RIGHT FAMILY, WITH
NO STRUGGLE TO
SURVIVE, WHAT DO
YOU KNOW?









LITTLE
SHIT--

SURE
YOU WANT
TO PLAY
WITH ME?



¡PUTA!



TOO
SLOW,
PUTA
FEA.



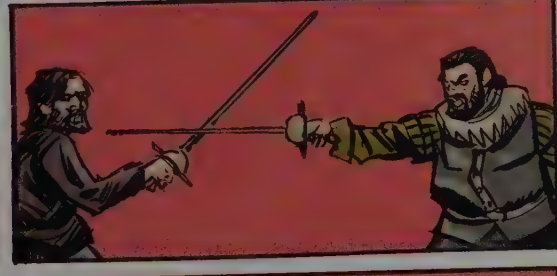
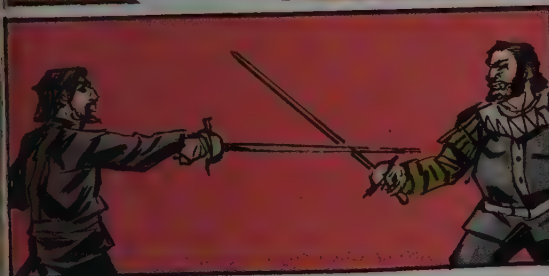
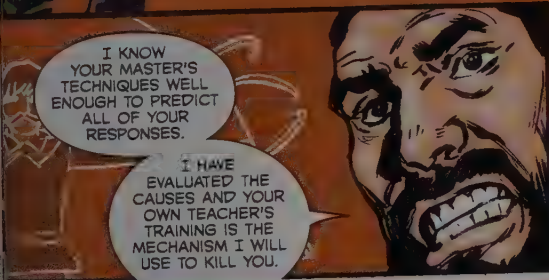
SOON
I WILL
HAVE YOU
ON YOUR
KNEES!

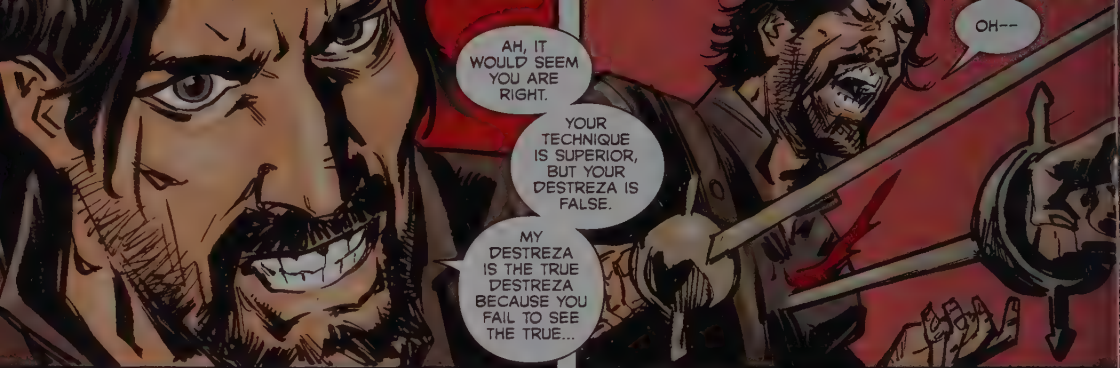


ON MY
KNEES?









OH--

AH, IT WOULD SEEM YOU ARE RIGHT.

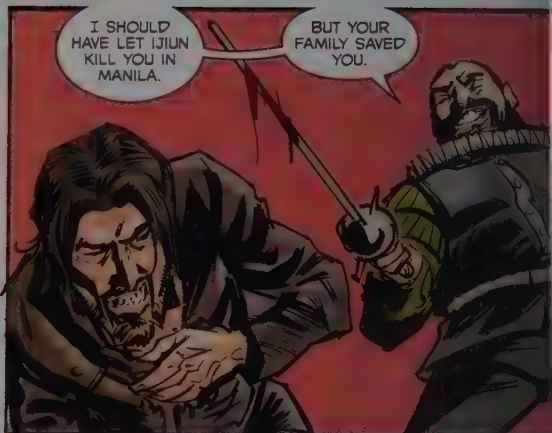
YOUR TECHNIQUE IS SUPERIOR, BUT YOUR DESTREZA IS FALSE.

MY DESTREZA IS THE TRUE DESTREZA BECAUSE YOU FAIL TO SEE THE TRUE...



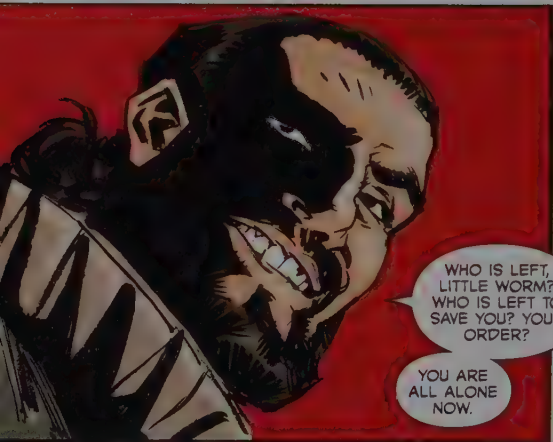
I SHOULD HAVE HAD YOU KILLED THAT DAY IN SATSUMA.

BUT THE PRIEST SAVED YOU.



I SHOULD HAVE LET IJUN KILL YOU IN MANILA.

BUT YOUR FAMILY SAVED YOU.



WHO IS LEFT, LITTLE WORM? WHO IS LEFT TO SAVE YOU? YOUR ORDER?

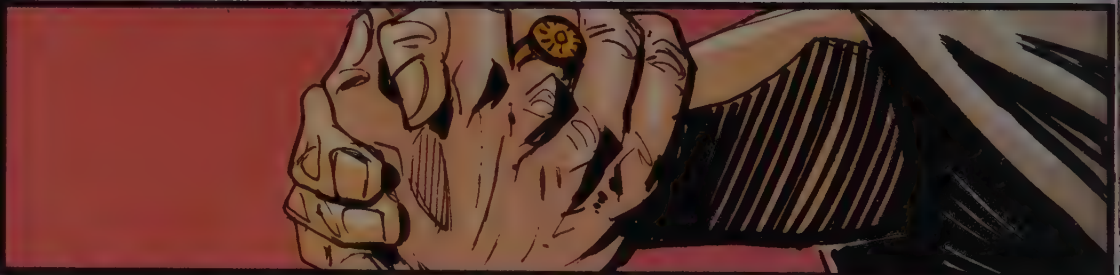
YOU ARE ALL ALONE NOW.



NO...NO MAN WHO PRACTICES TRUE DESTREZA IS WITHOUT FRIENDS.







¡DIABLO!
THESE STEPS
ARE STEEP...WHAT
KIND OF PEOPLE
WOULD HAVE
STAIRS LIKE
THESE?

YOU'RE
NOT DYING
BEFORE
ME.

AH, I KNEW I
COULD CONVINCE
YOU TO CHANGE
YOUR MIND
ABOUT SLITTING
YOUR BELLY.

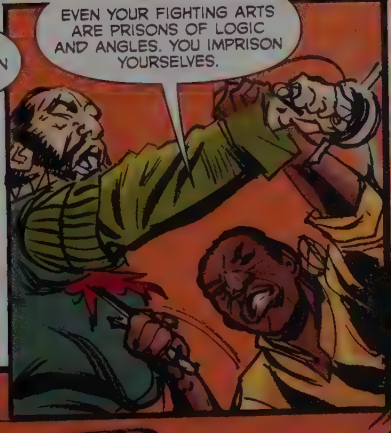
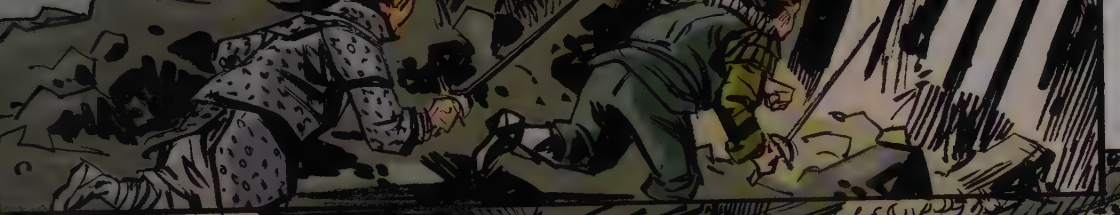
I TOLD
YOU--STOP
TALKING!

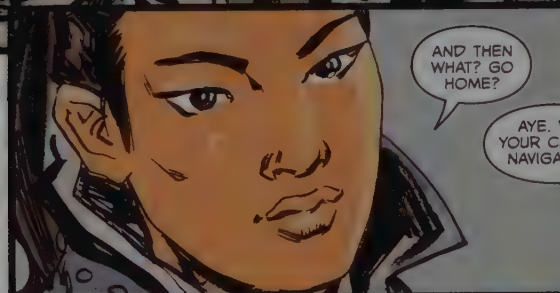
I KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE
THINKING...

SHUT UP,
LUIS.

BUT THIS
IS ALL PART
OF THE
PLAN...

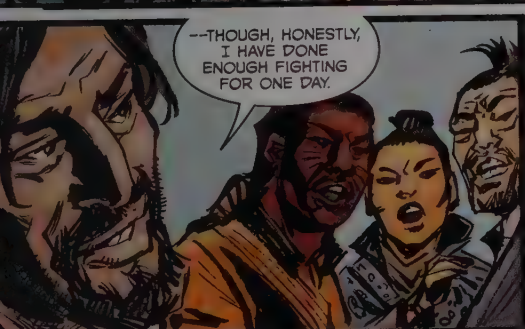
くそ伴天連!







IF I WERE NOT INJURED, IT MIGHT NOT BE--

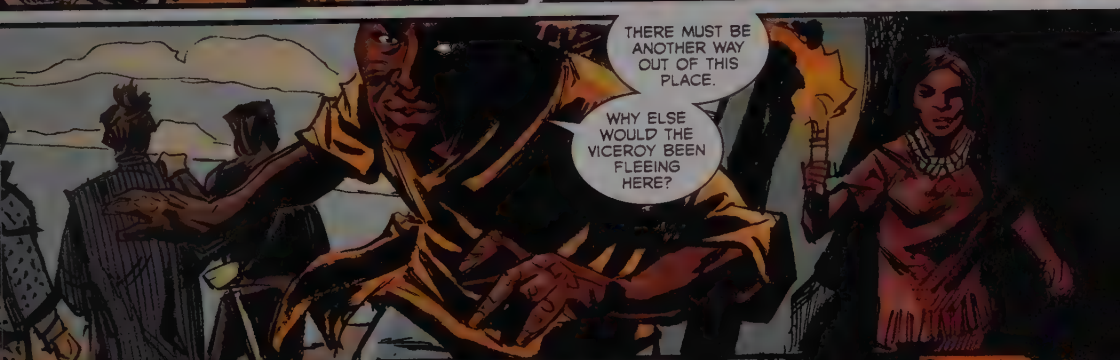


--THOUGH, HONESTLY, I HAVE DONE ENOUGH FIGHTING FOR ONE DAY.



IS IT ALWAYS LIKE THIS WITH HIM?

IT'S ACTUALLY QUITE PEACEFUL WHEN HE'S ASLEEP.

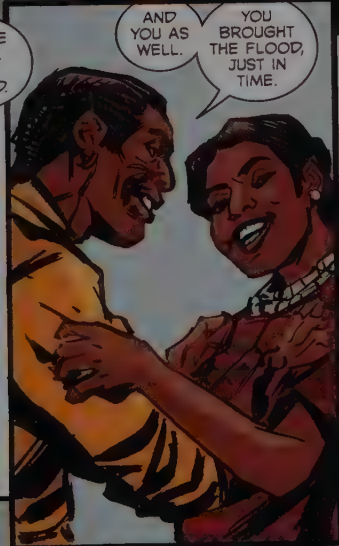


THERE MUST BE ANOTHER WAY OUT OF THIS PLACE.

WHY ELSE WOULD THE VICEROY BEEN FLEEING HERE?



MY FIERCE WARRIOR. YOU ARE UNHARMED.



AND YOU AS WELL.

YOU BROUGHT THE FLOOD, JUST IN TIME.



I BRING LIGHT AND AIR TOO.

COME WITH ME. I KNOW THE WAY.

I HOPE YOU BROUGHT MORE TORCHES. THIS PLACE MUST BE FILLED WITH SNAKES.



DON'T EVEN PRETEND THAT YOU HAD THIS PLANNED.

ME? WHEN HAVE I EVER GIVEN YOU THAT IMPRESSION?



LOOK OUT FOR SNAKES. ESPECIALLY FER-DE-LANCES.

YOU AND YOUR SNAKES! FER-DE-LANCES HUNT AT NIGHT.

IT IS DARK HERE.

I, TOO, DO NOT LIKE SNAKES.

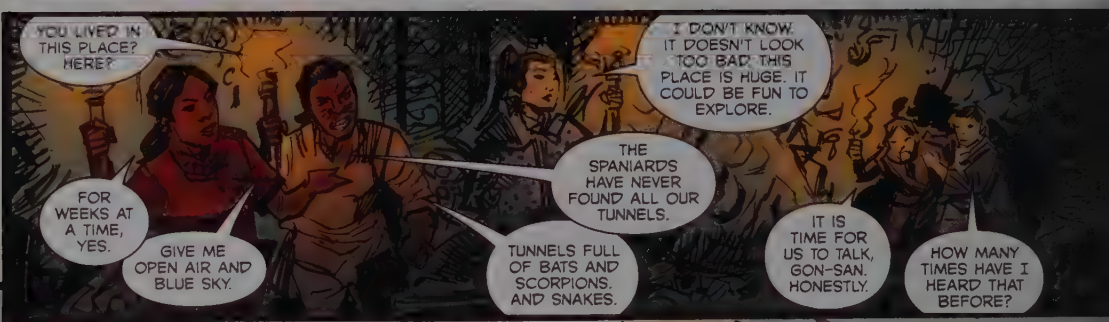


HOW DO YOU KNOW THIS PLACE, XOCHITL?

I GREW UP HERE.

MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER WAS A PRIEST IN THIS TEMPLE. MY GRANDFATHER, TOO. EVEN AFTER THE SPANIARDS CAME, WE HELD CEREMONIES HERE.

THE SPANIARDS NEVER KNEW.



YOU LIVED IN THIS PLACE? HERE?

FOR WEEKS AT A TIME, YES.

GIVE ME OPEN AIR AND BLUE SKY.

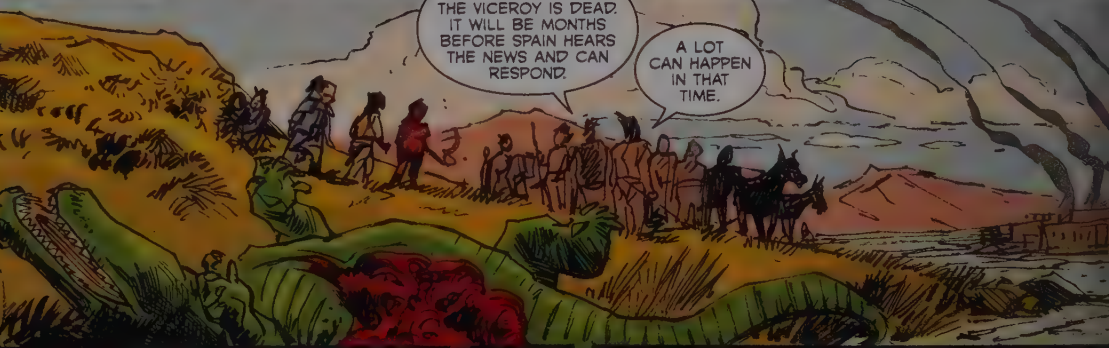
THE SPANIARDS HAVE NEVER FOUND ALL OUR TUNNELS.

TUNNELS FULL OF BATS AND SCORPIONS. AND SNAKES.

I DON'T KNOW. IT DOESN'T LOOK TOO BAD. THIS PLACE IS HUGE. IT COULD BE FUN TO EXPLORE.

IT IS TIME FOR US TO TALK, GON-SAN. HONESTLY.

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I HEARD THAT BEFORE?



THE VICEROY IS DEAD. IT WILL BE MONTHS BEFORE SPAIN HEARS THE NEWS AND CAN RESPOND.

A LOT CAN HAPPEN IN THAT TIME.



I GAVE YOU MY WORD. I WILL FIND YOU CHINESE NAVIGATORS.

AYE, TO TAKE US HOME.



BUT PERHAPS HOME IS HERE.



HOME IS WHERE YOUR FAMILY IS, ISN'T IT?



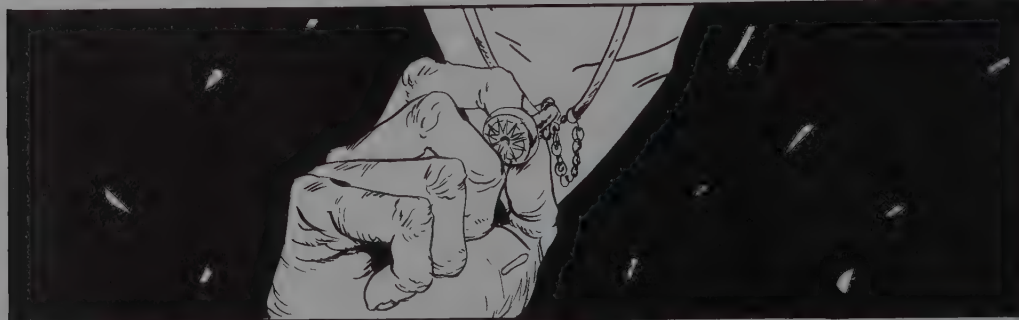
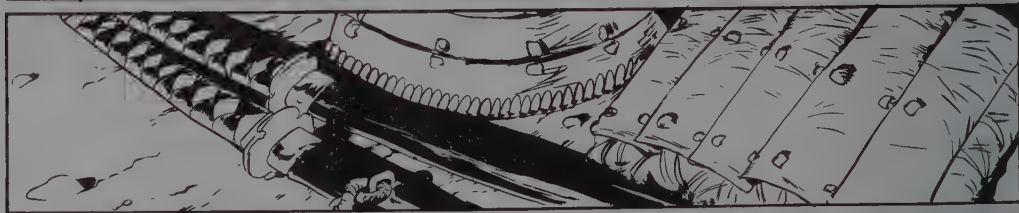
ちくしょう。I'M STUCK WITH YOU, AREN'T I?

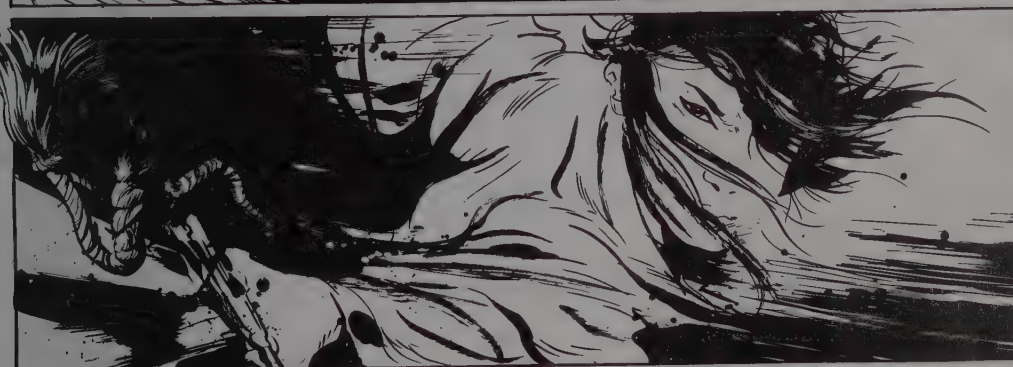
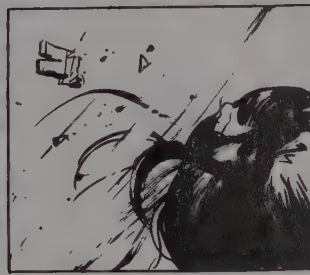
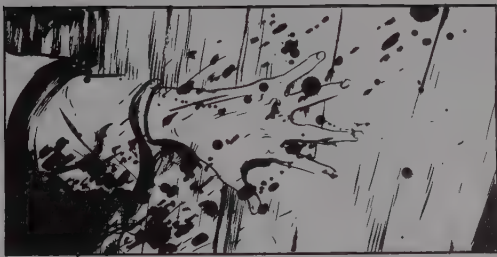
FIN!

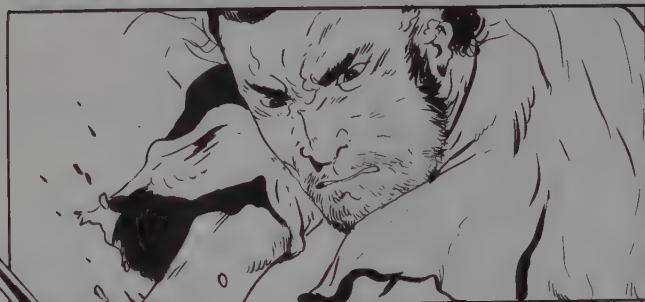
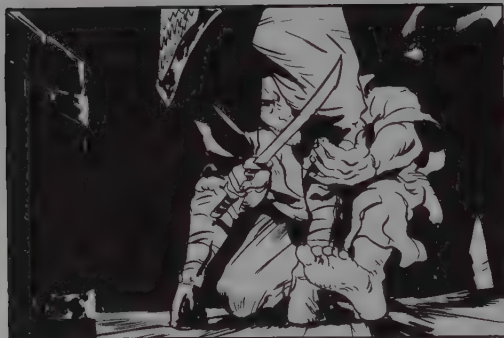
UNSHEATHED:

Bonus Artwork by
ROBERT SAMMELIN
and **DEAN KOTZ**



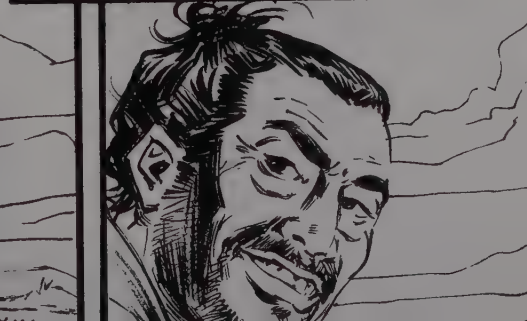
















THE CREATORS WISH TO THANK...

Bruce Bookman
Puck Curtis
Bob MacDougal
Scott Sessions
Andrew Shinn
Reiko Sono
Zipporah Teppo
Shane Tice
and Brandon Uttech

for their invaluable assistance
in matters martial and historical.





BIDS

- **NEAL STEPHENSON** is primarily a fiction author and has received several awards for his works in speculative fiction. His most popular books include *Snow Crash*, *The Diamond Age*, *Cryptonomicon*, *The Baroque Cycle*, and *Anathem*. He is a co-founding author of the Foreworld universe and co-author of *The Mongoliad* trilogy. He resides in Seattle with his family.
- **MARK TEPP** is the author of the *Codex of Souls* urban fantasy series, the hypertext dream narrative *The Potemkin Mosaic*, and the vampire eco-thriller *Earth Thirst*. He is a co-founding author of the Foreworld universe and co-author of *The Mongoliad* trilogy, along with many other tales in the universe. A bibliophile whose interests include historical martial arts and esoteric traditions, he lives in the Pacific Northwest.
- **CHARLES C. MANN** is the author of *1493*, a *New York Times* bestseller, and *1491*, which received the Keck Award from the National Academy of Science. The co-author of five additional books, including a young readers' version of *1491* called *Before Columbus*, Charles is a regular contributor to *The Atlantic*, *Science*, and *Wired*. He has covered science, technology, and commerce for publications such as *National Geographic*, *The New York Times*, *Vanity Fair*, and *The Washington Post*. Charles has been a finalist for the National Magazine Award four times, and has won writing awards from the American Bar Association, the American Institute of Physics, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and the Margaret Sanger Foundation.
- **ROBERT SAMMELIN** was born and raised in the mining town of Kiruna, Sweden, and has been a resident of Stockholm since the late '90s. He is a self-taught artist, illustrator, and graphic designer. Since 2007, he has worked as a senior concept artist at DICE, the studio behind the groundbreaking and award-winning *Battlefield* and *Mirror's Edge* video games. His previous work includes Avalanche Studio's *Just Cause* video games, movie storyboards, logos, book and CD covers, magazine illustrations, and self-published comics.
- **ELLIS AMDUR** is a well-known practitioner and researcher of classical Japanese martial arts. He has written three books on the subject, including *Dueling with O-sensei*, *Old School*, and *Hidden in Plain Sight*. Ellis also works as a crisis intervention specialist and has authored and published nine books on the de-escalation of aggressive, emotionally disturbed individuals. His first novel, *The Girl with the Face of the Moon*, was published through Kindle Direct in 2015.
- **DEAN KOTZ** has drawn comics for a variety of publishers, including Boom! Studios, Zenoscope, Monkeybrain, and Image. He lives in Brooklyn, NY.

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*In a deadly land, a samurai, a priest, and an
army of slaves fight for honor and freedom.*

A disgraced outcast samurai living in early seventeenth-century Manila, Kitazume is contemplating ritual suicide when a divine force (of a sort) intervenes: Luis, a rogue Jesuit priest and Kitazume's longtime friend. At Luis's insistence, the samurai agrees to help smuggle a Manchu princess to Mexico. But little does he know that he's really been dragged into an epic struggle for power.

As they become embroiled in the deadly politics of New Spain, Kitazume uses his lethal skills to save his friends—and to find redemption. Meanwhile, Luis secretly works as a member of the legendary Shield-Brethren, whose mission is to see that neither China nor Spain controls the silver mines owned by Luis's very father. As politics and greed collide, Kitazume must call upon his deadly skills once more. But he's not just fighting to save his friends—he's fighting for the redemption he so desperately craves.

Packed with adventure, twists, and gorgeous visuals,
Cimarronin: The Complete Graphic Novel collects
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Cimarronin: Fall of the Cross #1-3.



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